三国志 ㉕

赤壁の前哨戦

横山光輝

希望コミックス 81

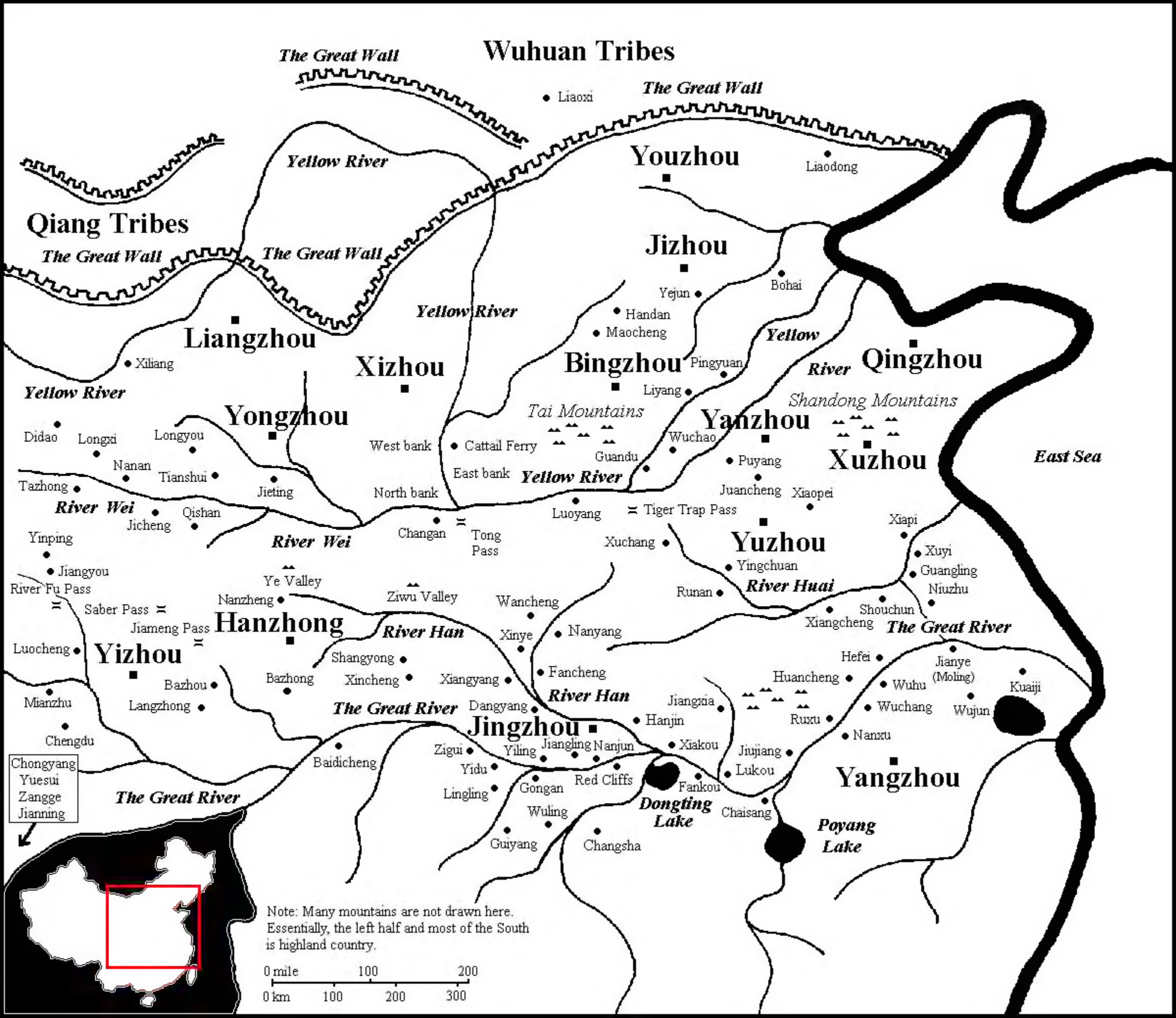
SANGOKUSHI

25

PRELUDE TO THE BATTLE OF RED CLIFFS

YOKOYAMA MITSUTERU

ZHOU YU GONGJIN


Wuhuan Tribes
The Great Wall
The Great Wall
Liaoxi
Youzhou
Liaodong
Yellow River
Qiang Tribes
The Great Wall
The Great Wall
Jizhou
Bohai
Yejun
Handan
Maocheng
Yellow River
Liangzhou
Xizhou
Bingzhou
Pingyuan
Yellow River
Qingzhou
Xiliang
Yellow River
Liyang
Shandong Mountains
Tai Mountains
Yongzhou
Yanzhou
Didao
Longxi
Longyou
West bank
Cattail Ferry
Wuchao
Guandu
Xuzhou
East Sea
Nanan
East bank
Yellow River
Puyang
Tianshui
Tazhong
Jieting
North bank
Juancheng
Xiaopei
River Wei
Qishan
Luoyang
Tiger Trap Pass
Jicheng
Changan
Tong Pass
Xiapi
Yuzhou
Yinping
River Wei
Xuchang
Xuyi
Jiangyou
Ye Valley
Yingchuan
Guangling
River Fu Pass
Ziwu Valley
Runan
River Huai
Niuzhu
Saber Pass
Nanzheng
Wancheng
Shouchun
Jiameng Pass
Hanzhong
River Han
Xinye
Nanyang
Xiangcheng
The Great River
Luocheng
Yizhou
Shangyong
Hefei
Jianye (Moling)
Fancheng
Huancheng
Bazhou
Bazhong
Xincheng
Xiangyang
Wuhu
Kuaiji
River Han
Jiangxia
Mianzhu
Langzhong
The Great River
Dangyang
Wuchang
Wujun
Ruxu
Hanjin
Jingzhou
Chengdu
Nanxu
Zigui
Yiling
Jiangling
Nanjun
Xiakou
Jiujiang
Baidicheng
Yidu
Lukou
Yangzhou
Chongyang
Yuesui
Zangge
Jianning
Red Cliffs
Fankou
Gongan
Lingling
Dongting Lake
Chaisang
Wuling
Poyang Lake
Guiyang
Changsha
The Great River
Note: Many mountains are not drawn here.
Essentially, the left half and most of the South
is highland country.
0 mile 100 200
0 km 100 200 300

SANGOKUSHI'S CAST OF CHARACTERS

PART 1: CHARACTERS TO KEEP IN MIND

CAO CAO MENGDE:
THE AMBITIOUS AND MACHIAVELLIAN HERO OF SANGOKUSHI. HAVING BECOME THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN, HE HAS RELEGATED EMPEROR XIAN AS A MERE PUPPET RULER.

CHEN DENG:
THE SON OF CHEN GUI AND FORMERLY TAO QIAN OF XUZHOU'S SUBORDINATE. HE AND HIS FATHER SUCCESSFULLY PLOTTED LU BU'S DOWNFALL.

CHEN GUI:
FATHER OF CHEN DENG WHO SUCCESSFULLY PLOTTED LU BU'S DOWNFALL. DESPITE SECRETLY WORKING TOGETHER WITH LIU BEI AGAINST CAO CAO, CAO CAO SPARES HIS LIFE AND ALLOWS HIM TO CONTINUE LIVING IN XUZHOU.

CHENG GONG:
A CITY GUARD CAPTAIN WHO ARRESTED CAO CAO, ONLY TO FREE AND ESCAPE WITH HIM AFTER SYMPATHIZING WITH HIS STORY. HOWEVER, HE LATER DEFECTS TO LU BU AND SERVES AS HIS ADVISOR. IN VOLUME 14, HE IS EXECUTED ALONG WITH LU BU.

EMPRESS HE:
ORIGINALY A PEASANT, HER BEAUTY WAS NOTICED BY THE TEN ATTENDANTS WHO THEN PRESENTED HER TO EMPEROR LING. SHE SOON BECAME EMPEROR LING'S FAVOURITE CONSORT AND GAVE BIRTH TO PRINCE LIU BIAN. HOWEVER, SHE AND HER SON WERE REMOVED FROM POWER AND KILLED BY LI RU WHEN DONG ZHUO CAME TO POWER.

DIAN WEI:
CAO CAO'S PERSONAL BODYGUARD, RENOWNED FOR HIS STRENGTH. HE IS ALSO KNOWN BY THE NICKNAME, "E LAI," IN REFERENCE TO THE MIGHT GENERAL OF THE SAME NAME WHO SERVED UNDER KING ZHOU OF SHANG. IN VOLUME 12, HE WAS KILLED DURING ZHANG XIU'S PLOT TO KILL CAO CAO.

DIAO CHAN:
A SLAVE GIRL OF WANG YUN, WHO RAISED HER AS HIS OWN DAUGHTER. SHE AND WANG YUN PLOTTED TO DISTANCE LU BU FROM DONG ZHUO BY HAVING HER SEDUCE BOTH MEN. IN VOLUME 8, SHE COMMITTED SUICIDE AFTER ACCOMPLISHING HER GOAL.

DONG CHENG:
ELDER STATESMAN OF HAN WHO IS EMPEROR XIAN'S CONFIDANT. EMPEROR XIAN SECRETELY ASKS HIM TO ELIMINATE CAO CAO, WHO NOW RULES THE IMPERIAL COURT AS CHANCELLOR. IN VOLUME 17, HE IS EXECUTED AFTER HIS ASSASSINATION PLOT IS FOUND OUT BY CAO CAO.

DONG ZHUO:
GOVERNOR OF LIANGZHOU WHO LATER SEIZED CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND SEATED HIMSELF AS THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN, BECOMING AN INFAMOUS TYRANT. IN VOLUME 8, HE IS BETRAYED AND KILLED BY HIS RIGHT-HAND MAN, LU BU.

GAN NING:
FORMER-PIRATE WHO IS NOT A FIRECE GENERAL OF WU.

GONGSUN ZAN:
GOVERNOR OF BEIPING AND FRIEND TO LIU BEI. HE WAGES WAR AGAINST YUAN SHAO AFTER THE LATTER TRICKS HIM AND KILLS HIS YOUNG BROTHER. IN VOLUME 15, YUAN SHAO'S ARMY CONQUERS BEIPING, CAUSING GONGSUN ZAN TO COMMIT SUICIDE.

GUAN YU YUNCHANG:
SWORN YOUNGER BROTHER TO LIU BEI AND SWORN OLDER BROTHER TO ZHANG FEI. HE IS AS FIERCE AS GUAN YU BUT IS MORE RESTRAINED AND CALM IN HIS MANNERISMS.

GUAN PING:
GUAN YU'S ADOPTED SON. ADOPTED IN VOLUME 19.

GUO JIA:
THE TALENTED STRATEGIST AND ADVISOR TO CAO CAO. HE DIES FROM ILLNESS DURING CAO CAO'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE YUAN FAMILY (UNSHOWN IN MANGA).

JIA XU:
THE SHREWD STRATEGIST AND ADVISOR TO ZHANG XIU. HE AND ZHANG XIU PLOTS A FAILED ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON CAO CAO, BUT SUCCEEDS IN KILLING DIAN WEI. IN VOLUME 16, HE AND ZHANG XIU DEFECT TO CAO CAO'S SIDE.

LI RU:
CUNNING ADVISOR TO DONG ZHUO. WITH HIS ADVICE, DONG ZHUO FIRMLY SECURES HIS SEAT AS THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN. IN VOLUME 8, HE IS KILLED ALONG WITH DONG ZHUO WHEN LU BU REBELS.

LIU BEI XUANDE:
THE CENTRAL CHARACTER OF SANGOKUSHI. A KIND AND VIRTUOUS MAN, SAID TO BE THE DESCENDANT OF EMPEROR JING OF HAN. HE HAS SWORN AN OATH OF BROTHERHOOD WITH GUAN YU AND ZHANG FEI.

LIU BIAO:
THE GOVERNOR OF JINGZHOU. HE PASSES AWAY DUE TO SICKNESS IN VOLUME 22.

LIU XIE (EMPEROR XIAN OF HAN):
FORMERLY KNOWN AS PRINCE OF CHENLIU, HE IS THE CURRENT EMPEROR OF HAN. HE BECAME THE EMPEROR WHEN DONG ZHUO FORCIBLY DETHRONED HIS HALF-BROTHER LIU BIAN.

LU BU:
HE IS SAID TO BE THE STRONGEST WARRIOR IN THE LAND WHO RIDES ON THE FASTEST HORSE IN THE LAND, THE RED HARE. IN VOLUME 14, HE WAS BETRAYED BY HIS SUBORDINATES (HOU CHENG, WEI XU, SONG XIAN), WHO HANDED HIM OVER TO CAO CAO. HE BEGS CAO CAO FOR MERCY BUT IS EXECUTED DUE TO LIU BEI'S DISAGREEMENT.

LU SU:
MILITARY GENERAL AND ADVISOR OF WU.

MA TENG:
GOVERNOR OF XILIANG AND FATHER OF MA CHAO. UNLIKE THE ACTUAL HISTORICAL FIGURE, HE IS DEPICTED AS A HAN LOYALIST WHO SIGNS DONG CHENG'S BLOOD SEAL PLEDGE.

SHUI JING:
HIS REAL NAME IS SIMA HUI BUT HE IS MORE COMMONLY KNOWN BY HIS TAOIST NAME, SHUI JING (MEANING WATER MIRROR). HE IS THE TEACHER OF ZHUGE LIANG, PANG TONG, AND XU SHU.

SUN CE:
ELDEST SON OF SUN JIAN. IN VOLUME 19, ASSASSINS MAKE A FAILED ATTEMPT AT HIS LIFE, BUT SUCCEEDS IN SEVERELY WEAKENING HIM. HIS HEALTH DECLINES FURTHER AS HE IS DRIVEN MAD BY THE SPIRIT OF YU JI, WHICH EVENTUALLY LEADS TO HIS DEATH.

SUN JIAN:
BORN IN WU COMMANDERY, HE WAS THE GOVERNOR OF CHANGSHA. IN VOLUME 5, HE PARTICIPATES IN THE ALLIANCE TO BRING DOWN DONG ZHUO. DURING THIS PERIOD, HE FINDS THE IMPERIAL SEAL, WHICH CAUSES YUAN SHAO AND LIU BIAO TO TURN ON HIM. IN VOLUME 7, HE TRIES TO EXACT HIS REVENGE ON LIU BIAO, ONLY TO BE KILLED IN BATTLED.

SUN QUAN:
YOUNGER BROTHER OF SUN CE AND THE CURRENT RULER OF WU, A REGION IN SOUTHERN CHINA.

TAISHI CI:
SUN CE'S TRUSTED GENERAL WHO DEFECTED TO SERVE SUN CE AFTER BEING CAPTURED IN VOLUME 11.

TAO QIAN:
THE KIND GOVERNOR OF XUZHOU WHO ACCIDENTALLY INVOKES CAO CAO'S WRATH WHEN HIS DISLOYAL SUBORDINATE ZHANG KAI KILLS CAO CAO'S FATHER, CAO SONG.

THE TEN ATTENDANTS:
A CORRUPT GROUP OF 10 EUNUCHS WHO WERE THE HIGHEST RANKING MINISTERS OF THE IMPERIAL COURT. THEY SUCCEEDED IN ASSASSINATING GENERAL HE JIN BUT WERE LATER KILLED BY HE JIN'S ARMY LED BY YUAN SHAO.

WANG YUN:
AN OLD MAN WHO HOLDS THE POST OF MINISTER OF THE MASSES, ONE OF THE 3 HIGHEST RANKING POSTS IN HAN IMPERIAL COURT. HE SUCCESSFULLY PLOTS DONG ZHUO'S DOWNFALL USING DIAO CHANG IN VOLUME 8. HOWEVER, HE IS LATER KILLED BY REMNANTS OF DONG ZHUO'S ARMY (UNSHOWN IN MANGA).

WEN CHOU:
HE AND YANG LIANG ARE YUAN SHAO'S TWO STRONGEST GENERALS. IN VOLUME 18, HE IS AMBUSHED BY CAO CAO'S ARMY AND KILLED BY GUAN YU.

XIAHOU DUN:
TRUSTED GENERAL OF CAO CAO. HE LOST HIS LEFT EYE DURING A BATTLE AGAINST LU BU'S ARMY IN VOLUME 13.

XU CHU:
TRUSTED GENERAL OF CAO CAO. ORIGINALY A PEASANT, HE WAS RECRUITED BY CAO CAO WHO WAS IMPRESSED AFTER SEEING XU CHU'S DUEL WITH DIAN WEI.

XU SHU (SHAN FU):
THE TALENTED STRATEGIST WHO STUDIED UNDER SHUI JING. AFTER A BRIEF STINT OF SERVING LIU BEI, HE IS TRICKED INTO COMING TO XUCHANG AND SERVING CAO CAO (VOLUME 21).

XUN YU:
ONE OF CAO CAO'S MOST TALENTED ADVISORS.

YAN LIANG:
HE AND WEN CHOU ARE YUAN SHAO'S TWO STRONGEST GENERALS. IN VOLUME 17, HE WAS KILLED BY GUAN YU WHILE FIGHTING CAO CAO'S ARMY AT BAIMA.

YI JI:
AN ADVISOR TO LIU BIAO WHO WARNS LIU BEI ABOUT CAI MAO'S PLOT TO ASSASSINATE LIU BEI IN VOLUME 20.

YUAN SHAO:
OLDER BROTHER OF YUAN SHU AND THE GOVERNOR OF JIZHOU. AFTER MANY YEARS OF WARRING AGAINST CAO CAO FOR CONTROL OF NORTHERN CHINA, HE AND HIS FAMILY IS DEFEATED AND KILLED.

YUAN SHU:
YOUNGER BROTHER OF YUAN SHAO AND THE GOVERNOR OF NANYANG. AFTER RECEIVING THE IMPERIAL SEAL FROM SUN CE, HE DECLARES HIMSELF AS THE EMPEROR OF ZHONG DYNASTY. IN VOLUME 15, HE DIES OF THIRST AFTER BEING ON THE RUN FROM LIU BEI AND CAO CAO'S ARMIES.

ZHANG FEI YIDE:
A FIRECE, SHORT-TEMPERED WARRIOR WHO IS THE SWORN YOUNGER BROTHER OF LIU BEI AND GUAN YU.

ZHANG LIAO:
ONE OF CAO CAO'S TOP GENERALS. HE WAS FORMERLY LU BU'S SUBORDINATE BUT DEFECTED TO CAO CAO AFTER THE FORMER'S EXECUTION.

ZHANG XIU:
LORD OF WANCHENG WHO ATTEMPTED TO KILL CAO CAO DURING THE BATTLE OF WANCHENG IN VOLUME 12. AFTER YEARS OF CONFLICT AGAINST CAO CAO, HE FINALLY DECIDES TO DEFECT TO CAO CAO IN VOLUME 16.

ZHAO YUN ZILONG:
A FORMER RETAINER TO YUAN SHAO WHO LATER DEFECTED TO SERVE GONGSUN ZAN. AFTER GONGSUN ZAN'S DEATH, HE LATER MEETS UP WITH LIU BEI AND FINALLY BECOMES HIS RETAINER.

ZHOU CANG:
FORMERLY A YELLOW TURBAN, HE MEETS GUAN YU IN VOLUME 18 AND BECOMES HIS SUBORDINATE.

ZHOU YU GONGJIN:
SWORN BROTHER OF SUN CE, HE IS A SKILLED ADMIRAL WHO SERVES AS THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF FOR WU'S ARMY. CONVINCED THAT HIS ALLY KONGMING IS TOO MUCH OF A THREAT, HE CURRENTLY SCHEMES FOR HIS DEATH.

ZHUGE LIANG KONGMING:
MASTERFUL STRATEGIST AND FORMER STUDENT OF SHUI JING. IN VOLUME 21, HE YIELDS TO LIU BEI'S PERSISTENCE AND DECIDES TO BECOME HIS SUBJECT.

SANGOKUSHI'S CAST OF CHARACTERS
PART 2: OTHER MINOR CHARACTERS

CAI MAO:
GENERAL SERVING UNDER LIU BIAO AND UNCLE OF LIU CONG. AFTER JINGZHOU'S SURRENDER TO CAO CAO, HE IS PLACED AS THE SUPREME ADMIRAL OF CAO CAO'S NAVY.

CAO REN:
GENERAL SERVING UNDER CAO CAO.

CAO HONG:
GENERAL AND COUSIN TO CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 6, HE SAVES CAO CAO FROM CERTAIN DEATH.

CAO SONG:
CAO CAO'S FATHER AND A FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL. IN VOLUME 8, HE IS KILLED BY TAO QIAN'S ESCORT AND FORMER YELLOW TURBAN, ZHANG KAI.

DING YUAN:
GOVERNOR OF BINGZHOU AND LU BU'S FOSTER-FATHER. HE OBJECTED TO DONG ZHUO'S SCHEME TO PLACE PRINCE CHENLIU AS THE EMPEROR OF HAN, EARNING DONG ZHUO'S WRATH. IN VOLUME 4, HE IS BETRAYED AND KILLED BY HIS FOSTER-SON, LU BU, WHO THEN DEFECTS TO SERVE DONG ZHUO.

EMPRESS DOWAGER DONG:
MOTHER TO THE FORMER EMPEROR LING AND GRANDMOTHER TO EMPEROR XIAN. IN VOLUME 3, EMPRESS HE ORDERS FOR HER DEATH TO SECURE HER SON LIU BIAN'S THRONE AS THE NEXT EMPEROR OF HAN.

GAO SHUN:
ONE OF LU BU'S TRUSTED GENERALS. HE IS EXECUTED ALONG WITH HIS LORD IN VOLUME 14.

GUO SI:
A GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED DONG ZHUO. AFTER DONG ZHUO'S DEATH, HE AND LI JUE TOOK CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND DID AS THEY PLEASED UNTIL THE EMPEROR RUNS TO CAO CAO FOR PROTECTION.

HE JIN:
OLDER BROTHER OF EMPRESS HE. ORIGINALLY A SIMPLE BUTCHER, HE BECAME A GENERAL WHEN HIS YOUNGER SISTER BECAME EMPEROR LING'S CONSORT. IN VOLUME 3, HE ATTEMPTS TO ELIMINATE THE TEN ATTENDANTS, ONLY TO BE DISSUADED FROM DOING SO BY HIS YOUNGER SISTER. HE IS LATER KILLED BY THE TEN ATTENDANTS.

HOU CHENG:
ONE OF LU BU'S GENERALS. IN VOLUME 14, HE, ALONG WITH GENERALS WEI XU AND SONG XIAN, BETRAYS LU BU AND DEFECTS TO CAO CAO'S SIDE.

HUA XIONG:
FAMED GENERAL SERVING UNDER DONG ZHUO. IN VOLUME 5, HE DEFEATS SUN JIAN'S ARMY BUT IS LATER KILLED BY GUAN YU.

JI PING:
IMPERIAL PHYSICIAN OF HAN WHO, WITH DONG CHENG, PLOTS TO POISON CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 17, CAO CAO DISCOVERS THEIR PLOT AND EXECUTES HIM.

JIANG GAN:
CHILDHOOD FRIEND OF ZHOU YU AND NOW AN ADVISOR TO CAO CAO.

JIANG QIN:
FORMERLY A BANDIT ALONG WITH ZHOU TAI, BUT BECAME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE OUT OF ADMIRATION FOR SUN CE'S FATHER, SUN JIAN.

LADY FUYOU:
FICTIONAL CHARACTER CREATED BY MITSUTERU YOKOYAMA AND LIU BEI'S FIRST LOVE. ZHANG FEI FORMERLY SERVED HER FAMILY, WHO WERE MASSCRED BY THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELS.

LADY MI:
LIU BEI'S FIRST WIFE.

LI JUE:
A GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED DONG ZHUO. AFTER DONG ZHUO'S DEATH, HE AND GUO SI TOOK CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND DID AS THEY PLEASED UNTIL THE EMPEROR RUNS TO CAO CAO FOR PROTECTION.

LI DIAN:
SCHOLARLY GENERAL UNDER THE SERVICE OF CAO CAO.

LIU BIAN:
THE SON OF EMPRESS HE AND BRIEFLY THE EMPEROR OF HAN AFTER THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER, EMPEROR LING. IN VOLUME 4, HE WAS DEPOSED BY DONG ZHUO AND LATER KILLED ALONG WITH HIS MOTHER BY LI RU.

LIU FENG:
LIU BEI'S ADOPTED SON. ORIGINALLY THE NEPHEW OF LIU MI, HE WAS ADOPTED BY LIU BEI WHO TOOK A LIKING TO HIM IN VOLUME 21.

LIU QI:
ELDEST SON OF LIU BIAO AND THE OLDER BROTHER OF LIU CONG.

MI ZHU:
ONE OF LIU BEI'S ADVISORS.

SUN QIAN:
ADVISOR/EMISSARY SERVING LIU BEI. (HIS ROLE IS MUCH SMALLER IN SANGOKUSHI COMPARED TO THE ORIGINAL NOVEL.)

YU JIN:
GENERAL SERVING CAO CAO. (IN RECORDS OF THE THRE KINGDOMS, WRITTEN BY CHEN SHOU, YU JIN IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE FIVE TOP GENERALS FOR WEI.)

LU ZHI:
LIU BEI'S FORMER TEACHER AND THE PALACE COMMANDER WHO WAS PLACED IN CHARGE OF LEADING THE HAN ARMY AGAINST THE YELLOW TURBANS. HE WAS LATER DEMOTED FOR FAILING TO BRIBE ONE OF THE IMPERIAL MESSENGERS.

ZHANG BAO:
ZHANG JIAO'S YOUNGER BROTHER AND THE YELLOW TURBAN'S GENERAL OF THE LAND. HE WAS KILLED BY LIU BEI IN VOLUME 2.

ZHANG JIAO:
LEADER OF THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELLION. HE PASSED AWAY DUE TO ILLNESS IN VOLUME 3.

ZHANG ZHAO/ZHANG HONG:
THE TWO GENIUSES OF JIANGDONG, ALSO KNOWN AS THE "TWO ZHANGS." AFTER SUN CE'S ADMANT INSISTENCE, THEY DECIDE TO SERVE HIM AND HELP HIS CAMPAIGN TO CONQUER JIANGNAN AND JIANGDONG.

ZHOU TAI:
FORMERLY A BANDIT ALONG WITH JIANG QIN BUT BECAME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE OUT OF ADMIRATION FOR HIS FATHER, SUN JIAN.

SANGOKUSHI
(ROMANCE OF THE
THREE KINGDOMS)

三国志（さんごくし）

VOLUME 25
PRELUDE TO THE BATTLE OF RED CLIFFS

CHAINED FLEET 177
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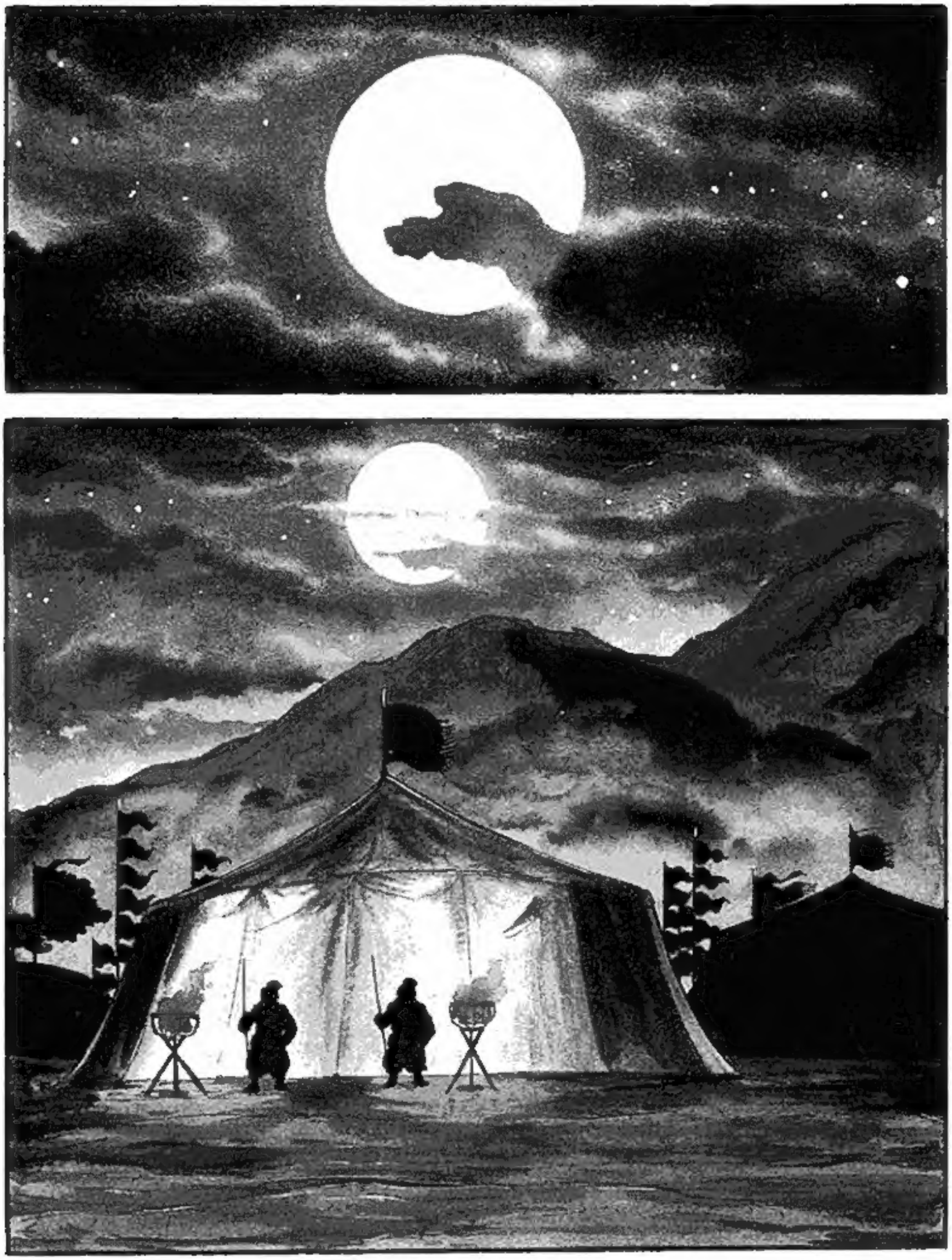
（『コミックトム』掲載）

DECEPTION



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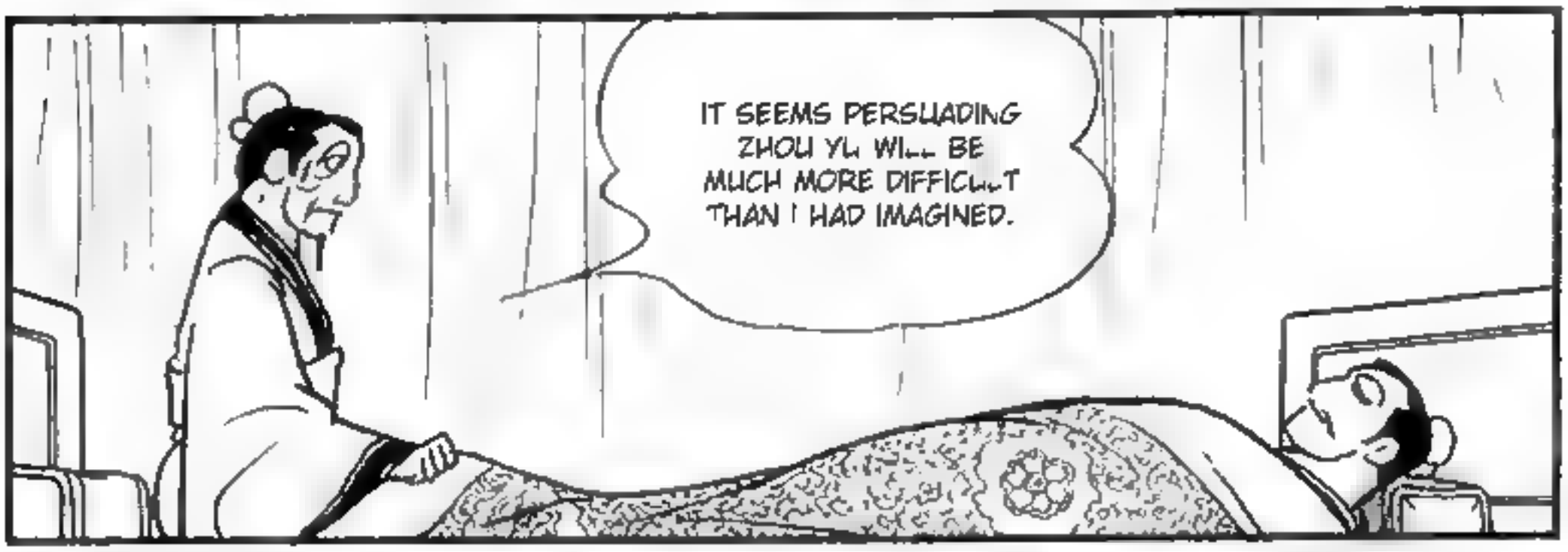
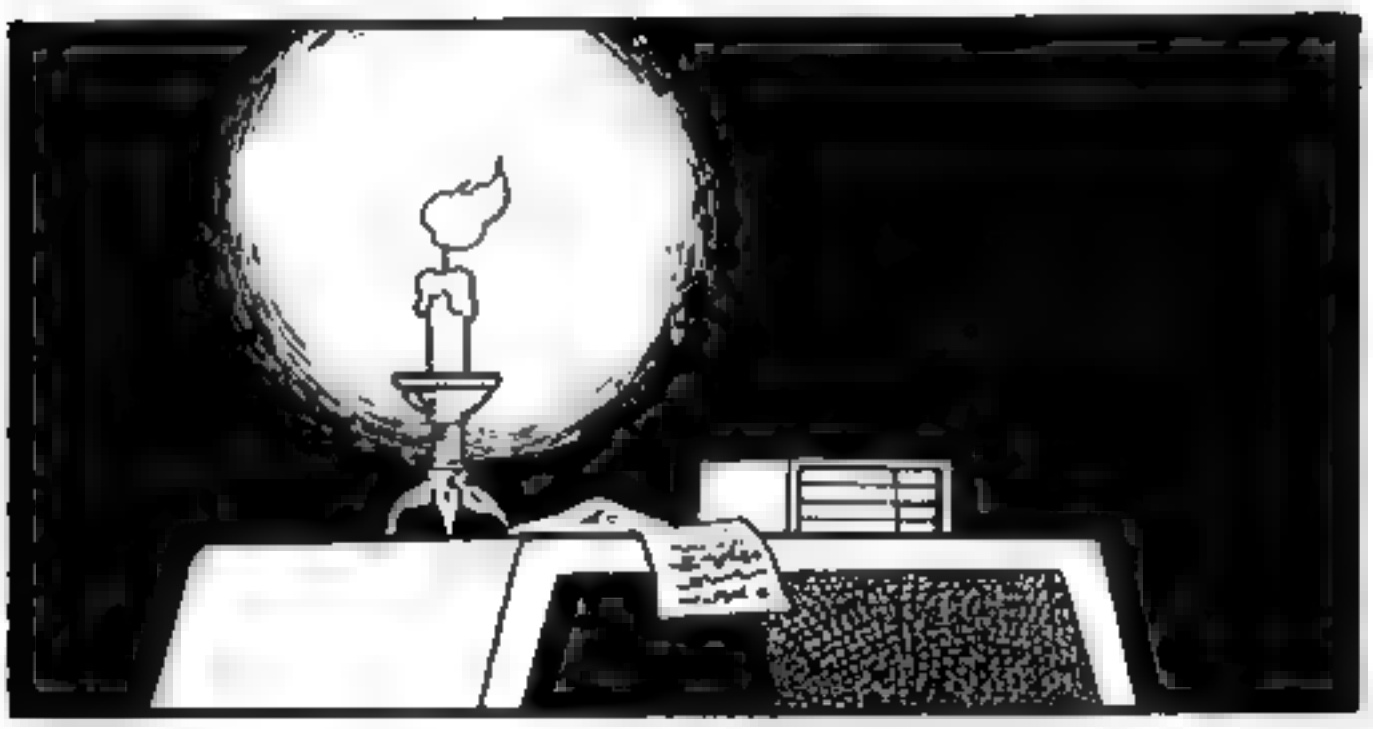
SIGH, I FELT LIKE I WAS ON PINS AND NEEDLES FOR THE WHOLE DAY.

ZZZ...


IT SEEMS PERSUADING ZHOU YU WILL BE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT THAN I HAD IMAGINED.



HM?

HMM, THIS SEEMS TO BE A STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL LETTER... I WONDER WHAT IT COULD BE ABOUT?

-Cai Mao-

HM?

"THE REASON WHY I HAVE SURRENDERED TO CAO CAO IS NOT FOR MY OWN SELFISH GAINS BUT ONLY UNDER THE STRESS OF DIRE CIRCUMSTANCES. EVEN NOW, I WISH NOTHING MORE THAN TO CHASE THESE NORTHERN INVADERS OUT FROM JINGZHOU."

WHAT WOULD A LETTER FROM THE SUPREME ADMIRAL OF CAO CAO'S NAVY BE DOING HERE?

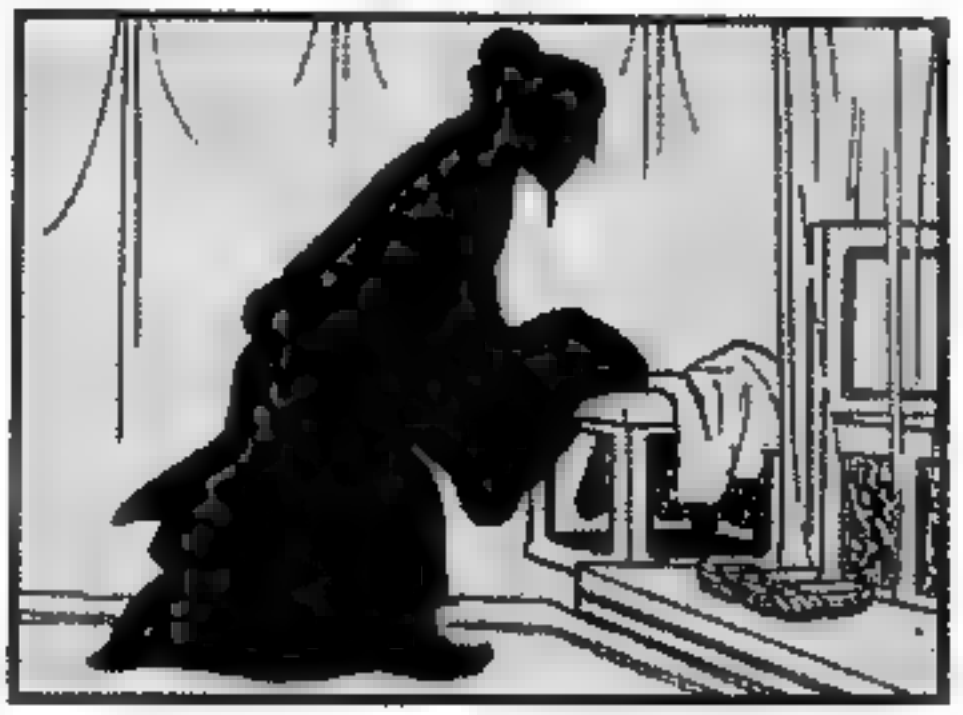
SO I ASK OF YOU, ZHOU YU. GIVE ME A SIGNAL AND I SHALL START AN UPRISING LED BY THE SOLDIERS OF JINGZHOU AT ONCE AND PRESENT YOU CAO CAO'S HEAD. I MAKE THIS REQUEST ALL IN ORDER TO AVENGE MY LATE-LORD'S DEATH AND TO RID THIS WORLD OF THE EVIL THAT IS CAO CAO. I HUMBLY AWAIT YOUR REPLY.

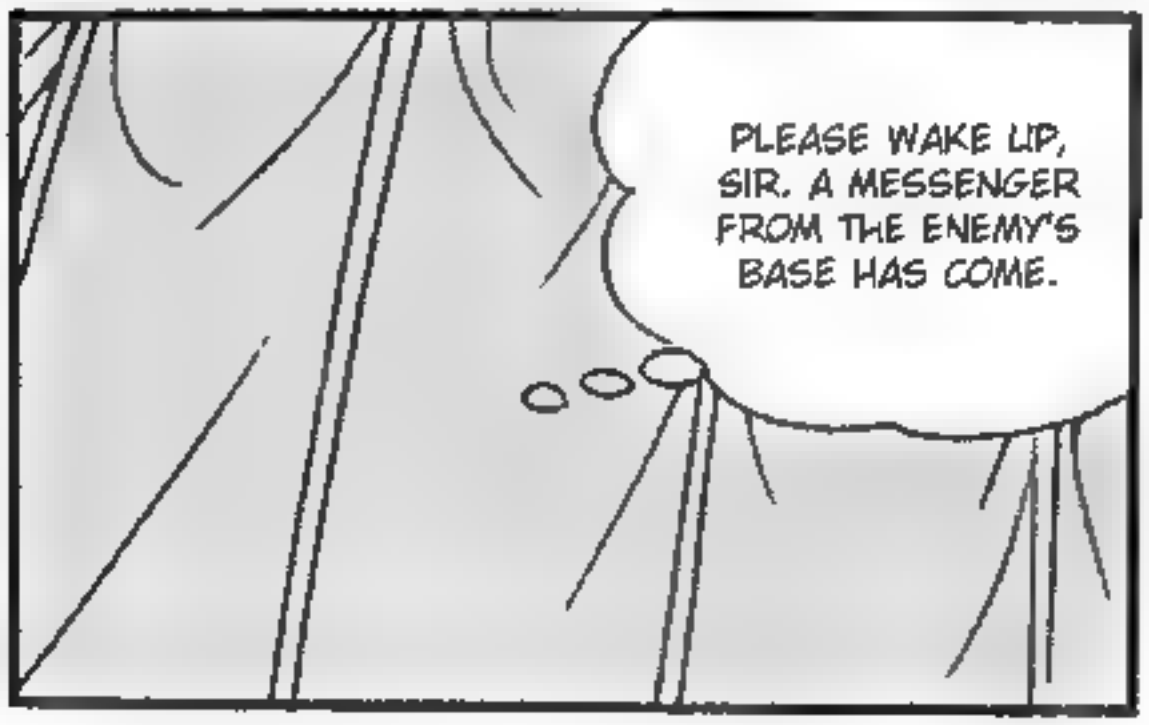
-CAI MAO-

MN...

OH NO! ADMIRAL CAI MAO PLANS TO BETRAY CHANCELLOR CAO CAO!

BLOW




PLEASE WAKE UP, SIR. A MESSENGER FROM THE ENEMY'S BASE HAS COME.

EXCUSE ME, ADMIRAL.

ADMIRAL, ARE YOU AWAKE?

A MES-SEN-GER?

PLEASE WAKE UP, ADMIRAL.

ADMIRA-?

CAI MAO'S UNDERLING HAS TO COME TO MAKE A REPORT.

WHAT IS IT NOW?

YAWN

AH!

WHAT!

JIANG GAN?

IS HE NOT JIANG GAN, YOUR OLD FRIEND?

WHO IS THIS MAN SLEEPING NEXT TO ME!?

YES, YOU ASKED HIM TO STAY THE NIGHT WITH YOU. DO YOU NOT REMEMBER, ADMIRA..?

AH, HOW SILLY OF ME. I MUST'VE DRANK TOO MUCH.

LET US CONTINUE OUR TALK OUTSIDE PRIVATELY.

CAI MAO AND ZHANG YUN HAVE... *WHISPER WHISPER WHISPER*

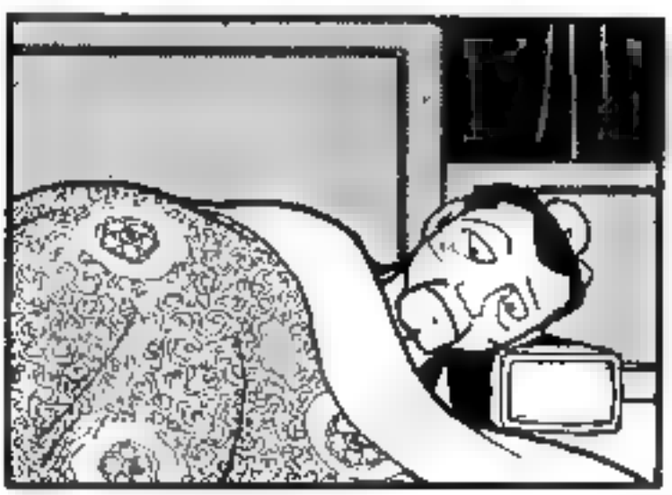
WELL, YOU SEE...

SO, WHAT DID HE HAVE TO SAY?

THIS IS TERRIBLE, I MUST RETURN AT ONCE TO ALERT THE CHANCELLOR...

YAAAWNN
UGH, I STILL
NEED MORE
SLEEP...

ZZZ...

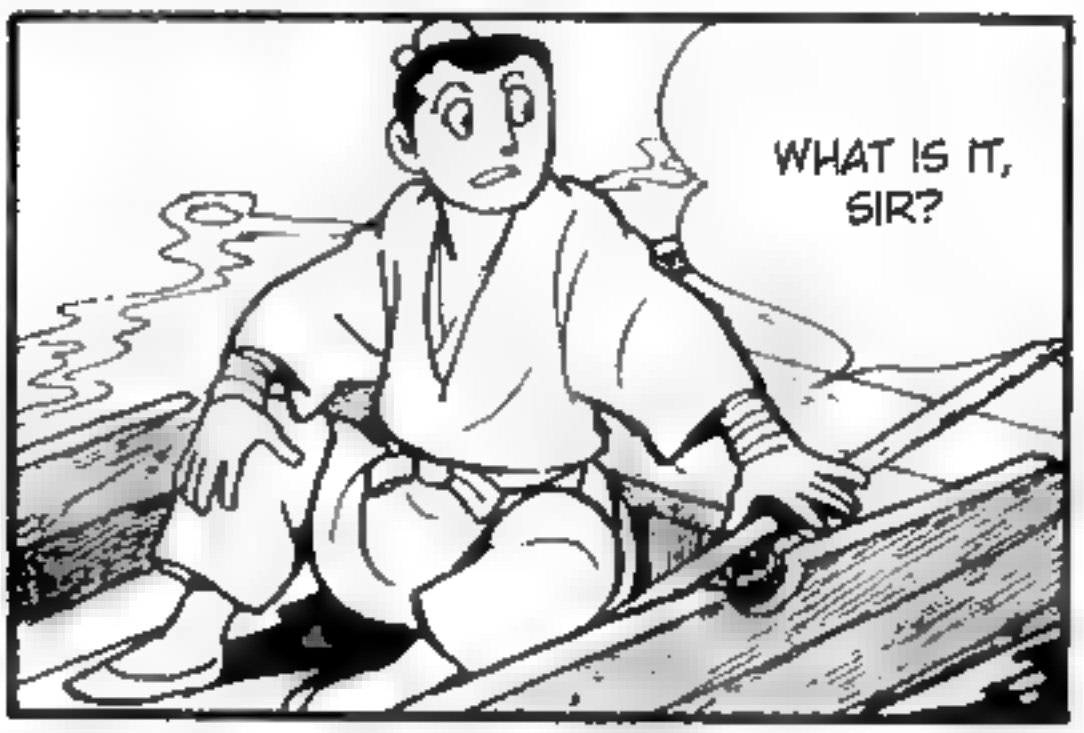


I'M JIANG GAN, AN OLD FRIEND OF ZHOU YU.

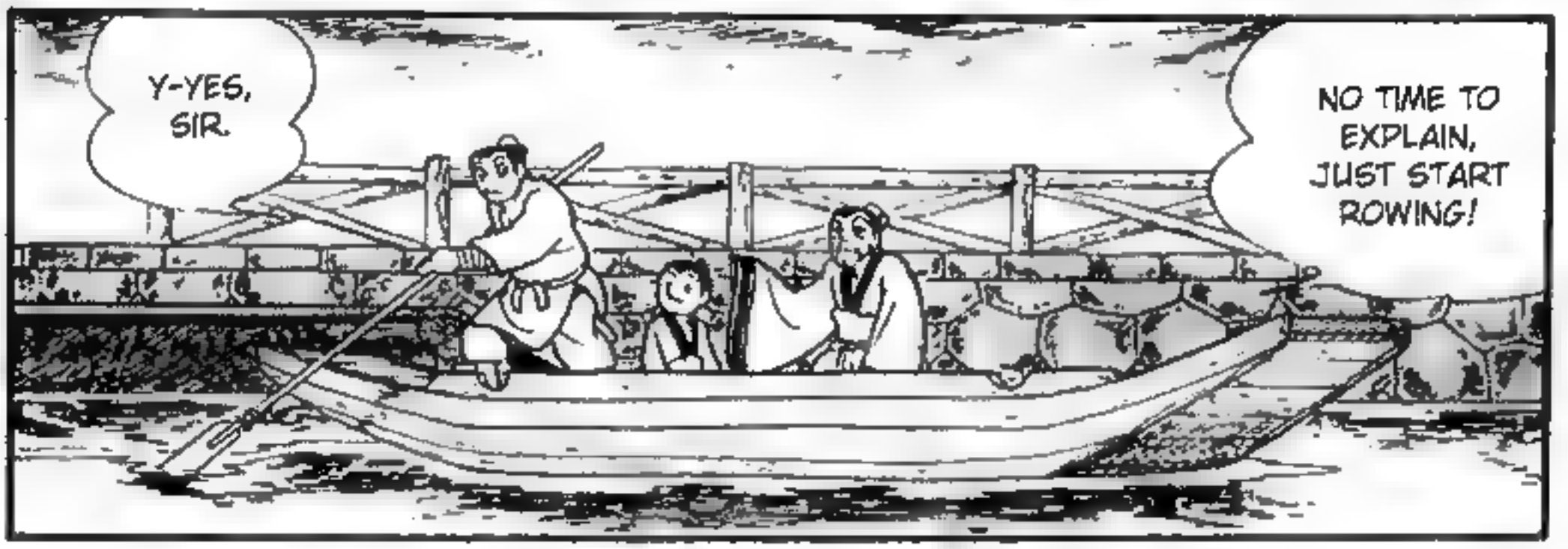
AH, EXCUSE US, SIR.

HALT! IDENTIFY YOUR-SELF!

NO, IT'S FINE. I ONLY CAME FOR A LITTLE NIGHT STROLL TO CLEAR UP MY HEADACHE FROM DRINKING.


WHAT IS IT, SIR?

WAKE UP!


Y-YES, SIR.
NO TIME TO EXPLAIN, JUST START ROWING!

MAKE SURE WE'RE NOT SPOTTED.
ROW AS FAST AS YOU CAN. I MUST ALERT THE CHANCELLOR BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE...!

UNFORTU-
NATELY SO,
CHANCELLOR.
YOU FAILED
TO PERSUADE
ZHOU YU?

ALTHOUGH I'VE FAILED IN MY TASK, I'VE UNCOVERED A MATTER OF DIRE IMPORTANCE.

SIGH, IF ONLY ZHOU YU WERE ON MY SIDE, CONQUERING WU WOULD ONLY BE TOO EASY...

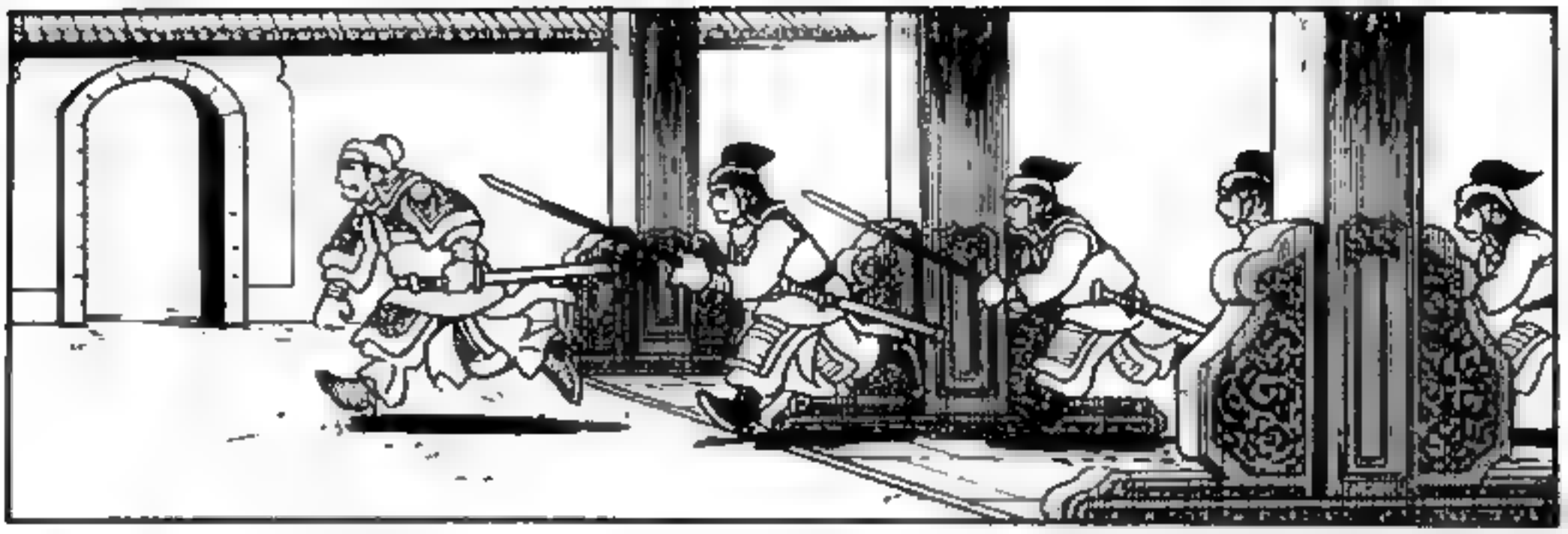
?

PLEASE LOOK AT THIS LETTER.

DIRE IMPOR-TANCE?

T-THIS IS...!

BRING CAI MAO TO ME AT ONCE!



W-WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS!?

WHAT IS THE CAUSE FOR THIS, CHAN-CELLOR!?

THE CAUSE IS THIS LETTER!

THE CAUSE?

I NEVER WROTE THIS, CHANCE-LOR! THIS LETTER IS FAKE!

IT SEEMS YOU'VE BEEN PLOTTING WITH THE ENEMY.

THIS IS A PLOY BY OUR ENEMIES, CHAN-CELLOR. WE MUST NOT LET OURSELVES BE DECEIVED!

YOU STILL FEIGN INNOCENCE WHEN YOU'VE BEEN CAUGHT RED-HANDED!?

CHANCE-LLOR!

SILENCE! GUARDS! OFF WITH HIS HEAD!

SLICE!

YOU PLOT MY DEATH AFTER I PROMOTED YOU AS MY FLEET ADMIRAL!? TREACHEROUS FOOL...

YES, SIR!

YES, SIR!

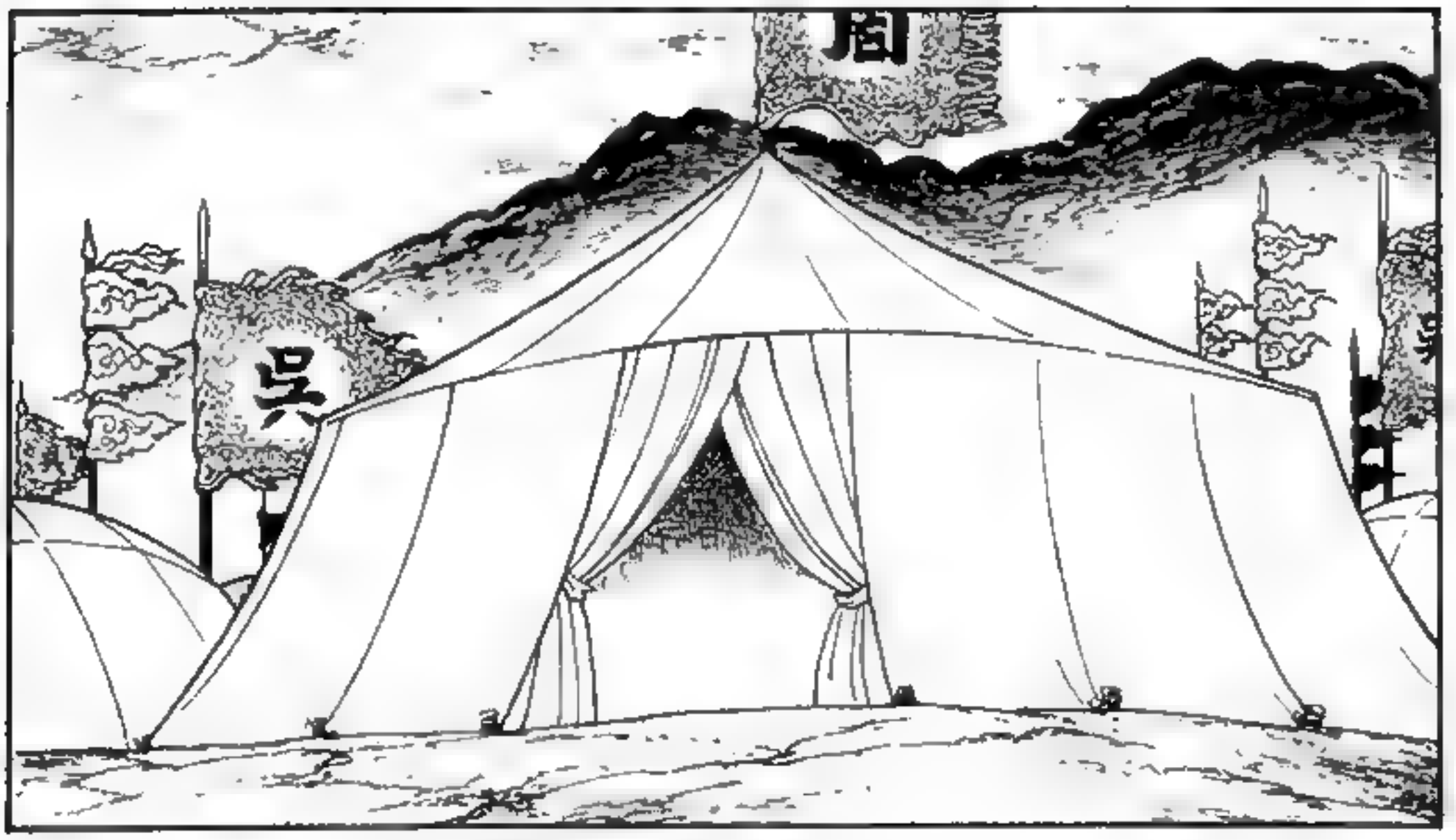
MAO JIE! YU JIN!

YES, SIR!

YES, SIR!

I HEREBY APPOINT YOU TWO TO COMMAND OUR FLEET.

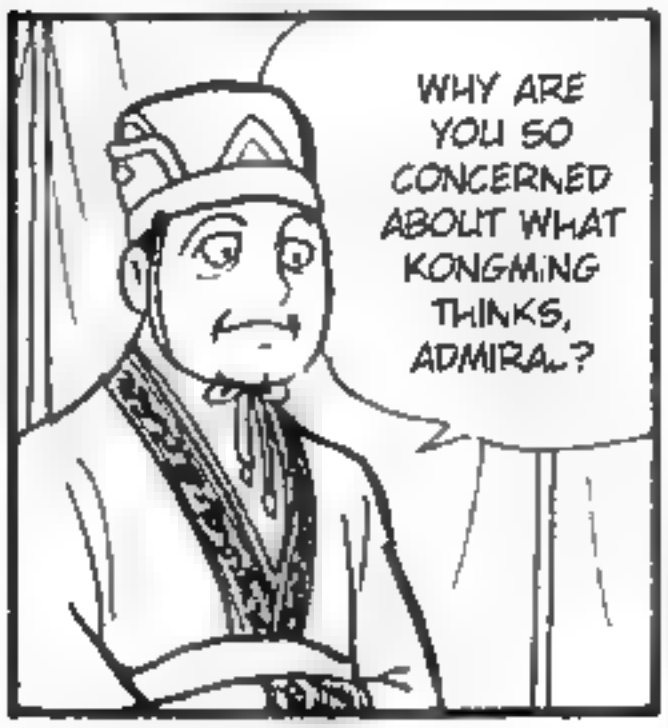
VEILED FLEET



WITH CAI MAO GONE, CAO CAO'S NAVY IS NOTHING TO FEAR.

COULD YOU GO AND ASK, LU SU?

HMM...
BY THE WAY, WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE KONGMING WOULD HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT THIS RUSE OF MINE?


WHY ARE YOU SO CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT KONGMING THINKS, ADMIRAL?

I SEE, SIR.
KONGMING IS SURE TO BECOME A DANGEROUS ENEMY TO US IN THE FUTURE. IT IS CRITICAL THAT WE TAKE NOTE OF HOW HE THINKS AND BEHAVES WHILE WE CAN

IT SEEMS HE'S STILL FEELING A BIT INSECURE...

AH, HELLO, LU SU.

ARE YOU THERE, KONGMING?

?

CONGRATU-ALTE? ON WHAT?

I WAS ACTUALLY JUST ON MY WAY TO CONGRATULATE ZHOU YU.

WHAT!

DID HE NOT SEND YOU HERE TO SEE WHAT I THOUGHT OF HIS PLAN TO REMOVE CAI MAO FROM COMMAND?

HE HAS MANAGED TO COMPLETELY FOOL CAO CAO USING JIANG GAN. IT SHOULD BE OBVIOUS WITHOUT ASKING ME THAT HIS PLAN WAS SUPERB.

HAHAHA. BUT IT CERTAINLY IS FOOLISH FOR ZHOU YU TO WONDER ABOUT WHAT I THINK.

YOU KNEW ALL ALONG?

YES, OF COURSE.

JUST GIVE THE ADMIRAL MY COMPLIMENTS ON HIS SUCCESS.

W-WELL, I'M SURE THE ADMIRAL JUST WANTED TO KNOW YOUR OPINION JUST IN CASE...

IT IS QUITE REASSURING TO SEE YOU COMPLIMENT THE ADMIRAL SO STRONGLY.

AH, I DO HAVE ONE THING TO ASK OF YOU.

BOTH MAO JIE AND YU JIN ARE INEXPRE-IENCED AT BEST WHEN IT COMES TO NAVAL WARFARE. IT IS CLEAR AS DAY THAT THEIR POOR LEADERSHIP WILL LEAD CAO CAO'S ARMY TO RUIN.

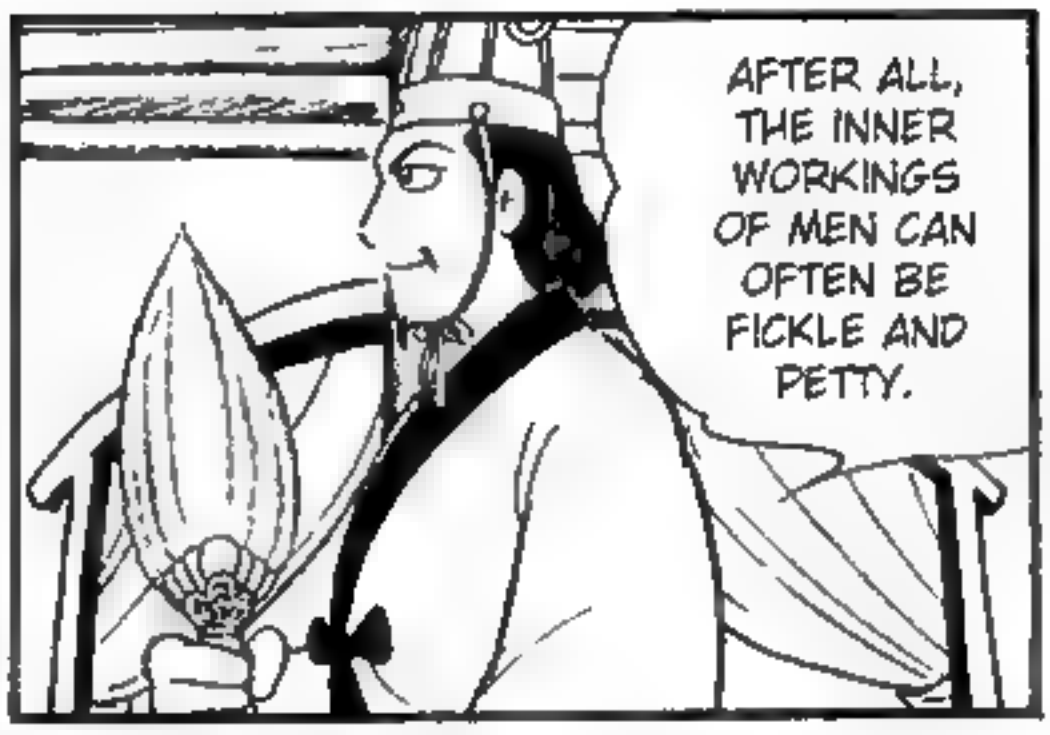
I'VE HEARD THAT CAO CAO HAS APPOINTED MAO JIE AND YU JIN AS THE HEAD NAVAL COMMANDERS TO REPLACE CAI MAO AND ZHANG YUN.

?

THOUGH YOU CAN GIVE ZHOU YU MY COMPLIMENTS, PLEASE DON'T TELL HIM THAT I KNEW ABOUT HIS PLAN ALL ALONG.

OTHERWISE, I FEAR THAT HE SHALL TRY TO HARM ME ONCE AGAIN.

Y-YES. EXCUSE ME THEN...


AFTER ALL, THE INNER WORKINGS OF MEN CAN OFTEN BE FICKLE AND PETTY.

JUST HOW MANY STEPS AHEAD CAN THAT MAN SEE...!?

JUST AS I THOUGHT, I CAN'T ALLOW HIM TO LIVE ANY LONGER... KEEPING HIM IN OUR ENCAMPMENTS IS BASICALLY THE SAME AS HAVING AN ENEMY SPY RUN AMOK IN OUR HOMELANDS.

YES, HIS INTELLECT IS TRULY FEARSOME.

WHAT! HE KNEW ALL ALONG!?

TIME FOR WHAT, ADMIRAL?

IT'S TIME...

WU SHALL BE IN GRAVE DANGER IF KONGMING IS ALLOWED TO RETURN BACK TO LIU BEI.

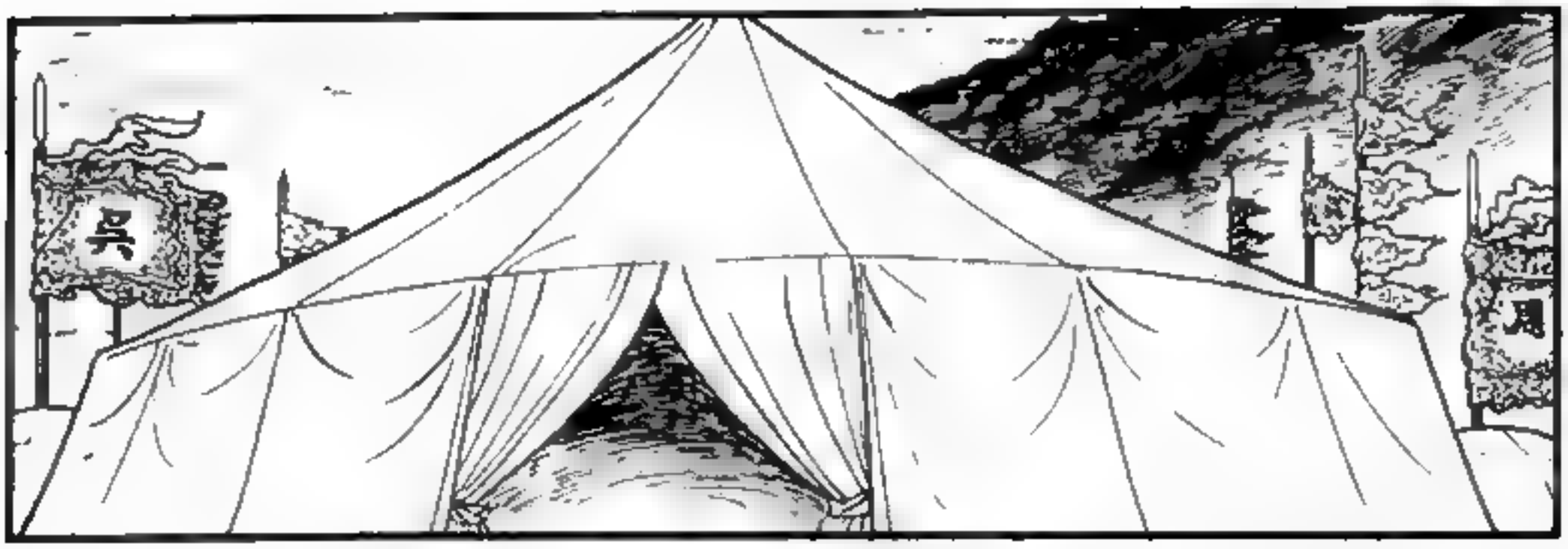
BUT TO KILL HIM WITHOUT ANY LEGITIMATE REASON IS TO SHOW THE WORLD THAT WU HAS NO MORALS.

IT'S TIME TO ELIMINATE KONGMING ONCE AND FOR ALL.

BUT THERE ARE NUMEROUS LEGITIMATE EXCUSES WE COULD USE...

YES, I KNOW...

SUCH AS FAILURE TO CARRY OUT A MILITARY ORDER...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ALRIGHT GENTLEMEN, THAT CONCLUDES OUR MEETING FOR TODAY.

HMM, I PERSONALLY THINK ARROWS ARE MOST IMPORTANT.

BY THE WAY, KONGMING, WHAT SUPPLIES DO YOU SUPPOSE WE'D NEED MOST FOR THE UPCOMING NAVAL BATTLE?

LONG AGO, TAI GONG WANG OF ZHOU EMPLOYED NUMEROUS CRAFTSMEN AND BLACKSMITHS IN HIS ENCAMPMENTS TO MAKE ARROWS.

RIGHT YOU ARE.

KONGMING, COULD I ASK YOU TO DO THE SAME AS THE GREAT STRATEGIST TAI GONG WANG DID? 100,000 ARROWS SHOULD DO.

NO, NO. BUT YOU SEE, WHEN IT COMES TO NAVAL BATTLES, AN ENTIRE SUPPLY OF ARROWS CAN RUN OUT WITHIN THE BLINK OF AN EYE...

HAVE OUR STOCK OF ARROWS HIT ROCK BOTTOM?

EXCELLENT. HOW DOES 10 DAYS SOUND TO FINISH YOUR TASK?

UNDERSTOOD, I SHALL SEE WHAT I CAN DO.

OF COURSE, YOU MAY EMPLOY AS MANY BLACKSMITHS AND ARROWMAKERS AS YOU WISH.

YOU MAY DECLINE IF YOU WISH BUT I'M AFRAID THAT UNDER MILIT-

10 DAYS!?

3 DAYS!?

NO, NO. IN WAR, SPEED IS OF THE ESSENCE. I SHALL HAVE 100,000 ARROWS READY FOR YOU WITHIN 3 DAYS.

OF COURSE NOT. HOW I COULD TELL SUCH A LIE DURING THIS SERIOUS MEETING?

THIS WOULDN'T BE A JOKE MADE IN BAD TASTE NOW, WOULD IT?

NOW THEN, IF YOU WOULD PLEASE EXCUSE ME...

NOR CAN I, BUT KONGMING SHOULD BE WELL AWARE OF THE CONSE-QUENCES OF LYING.

HM...

I CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT I JUST HEARD!

LU SU IS RIGHT. IT CANNOT BE DONE! HE'S BEING FOOL-ISHLY OVERCONFI-DENT IF HE TRULY BELIEVES HE CAN DO IT.

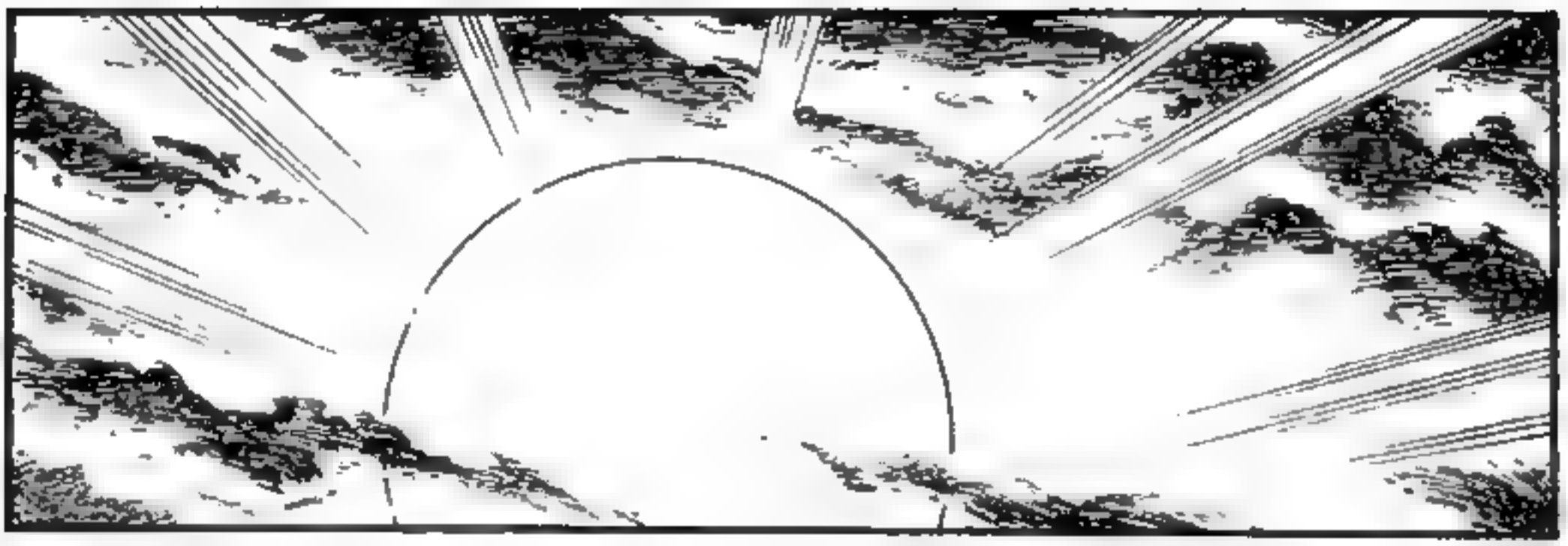
BUT THEN, HOW ON EARTH IS HE PLANNING TO MAKE 100,000 ARROWS IN ONLY 3 DAYS!?

NO, I DO NOT BELIEVE KONGMING IS THE TYPE OF MAN TO COWARDLY FLEE LIKE THAT.

YOU DON'T THINK HE PLANS TO EXCAPE BACK TO HIS LORD, DO YOU ADMIRAL?

IF HE FAILS TO MAKE THE ARROWS, THEN EVEN HE WON'T BE ABLE TO COMPLAIN WHEN I EXECUTE HIM.

BUT JUST IN CASE, HAVE THE GUARDS KEEP CONSTANT WATCH ON KONGMING'S SHIP.



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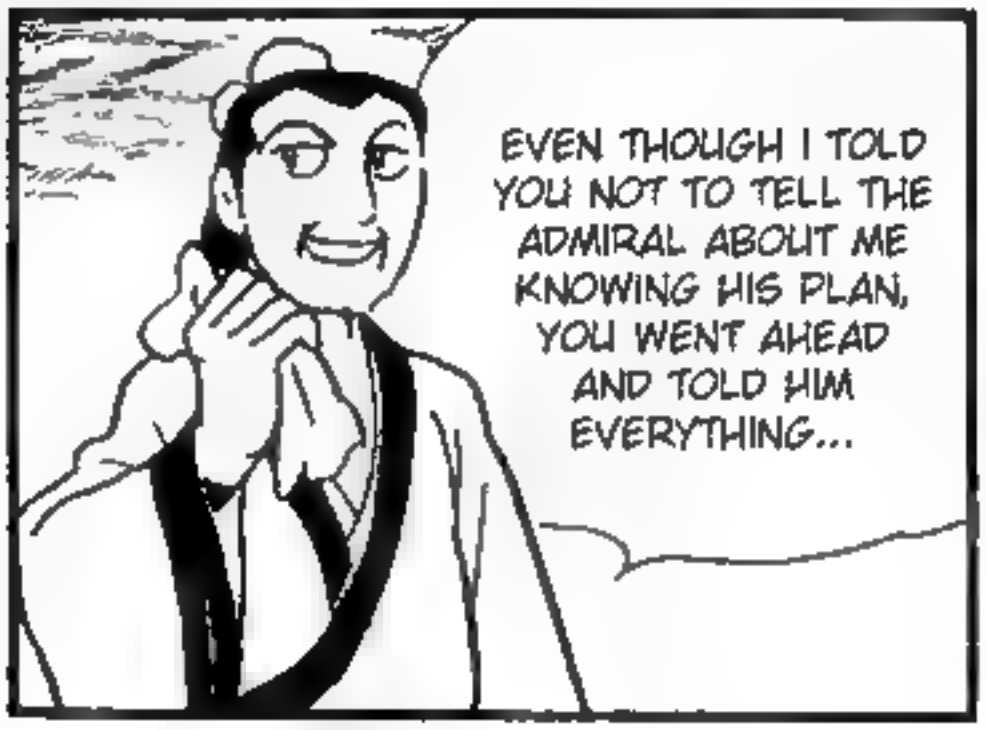

EVEN THOUGH I TOLD YOU NOT TO TELL THE ADMIRAL ABOUT ME KNOWING HIS PLAN, YOU WENT AHEAD AND TOLD HIM EVERYTHING...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
OH LU SU, YOU ARE INCORRIGI-BLE!

AND FAILURE WOULD OBVIOUSLY ENTAIL SEVERE PUNISHMENTS FOR MY POOR SELF...

THANKS TO YOU, THE ADMIRAL'S HOSTILITIES TOWARDS ME HAS BEEN REKINDLED, WHICH IS WHY HE NOW ORDERS ME TO CARRY OUT THIS NIGH-IMPOSSIBLE TASK.

AND YOU CONFIDENTLY STATED IT IN FRONT OF ALL THE OTHER GENERALS TOO...

B-BUT YOU WERE THE ONE WHO ASKED FOR THE TIME LIMIT TO BE SHORTENED FROM 10 DAYS TO 3 DAYS!

WELL... I'M NOT SURE HOW I CAN EXACTLY HELP THOUGH...

YES, I KNOW. ALL I ASK FOR IS A LITTLE HELP FROM YOU. AFTER ALL, YOU CAN'T SAY THAT YOU'RE NOT RESPONSIBLE AT ALL.

AND ON EACH SHIP, THERE ARE TO BE BLUE COTTON SCREENS AND BUNDLES OF STRAW.

JUST LEND ME 600 SOLDIERS AND 20 BOATS.

JUST BE SURE NOT TO TELL THE ADMIRAL ABOUT ANY OF THIS. HE MAY REFUSE MY REQUEST, AFTER ALL.

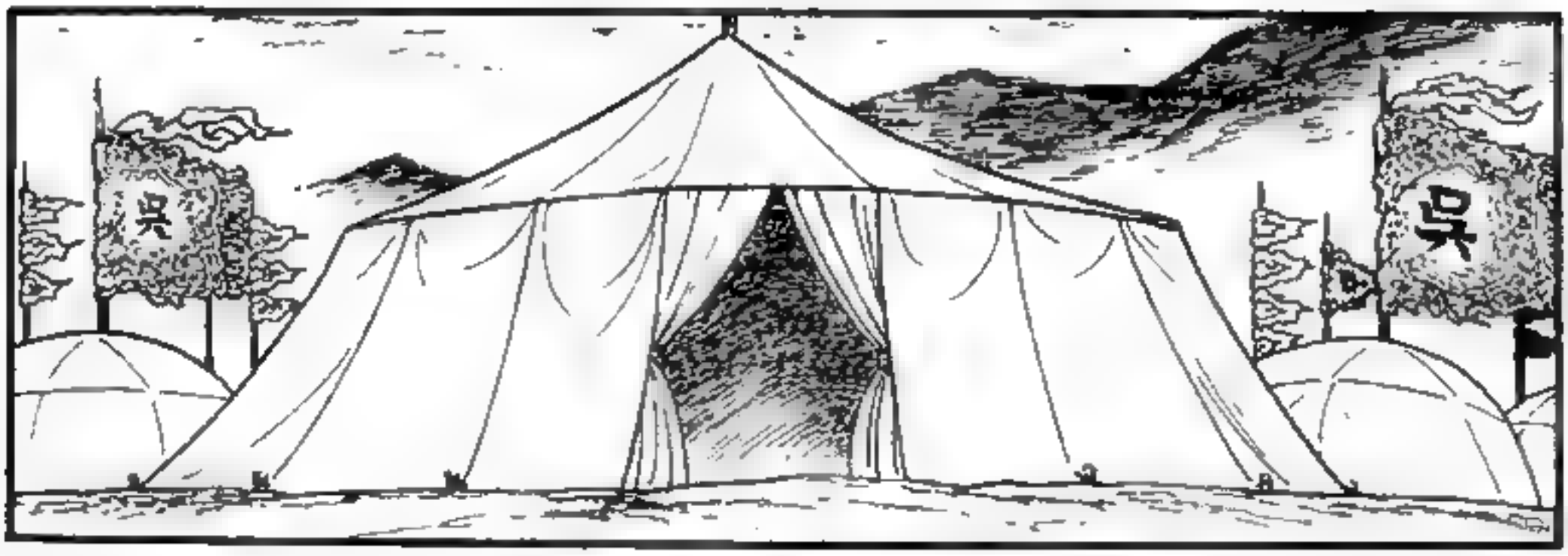
?

IF YOU CAN PREPARE ALL THAT FOR ME, I'M SURE I CAN MAKE 100,000 ARROWS WITHIN 3 DAYS.

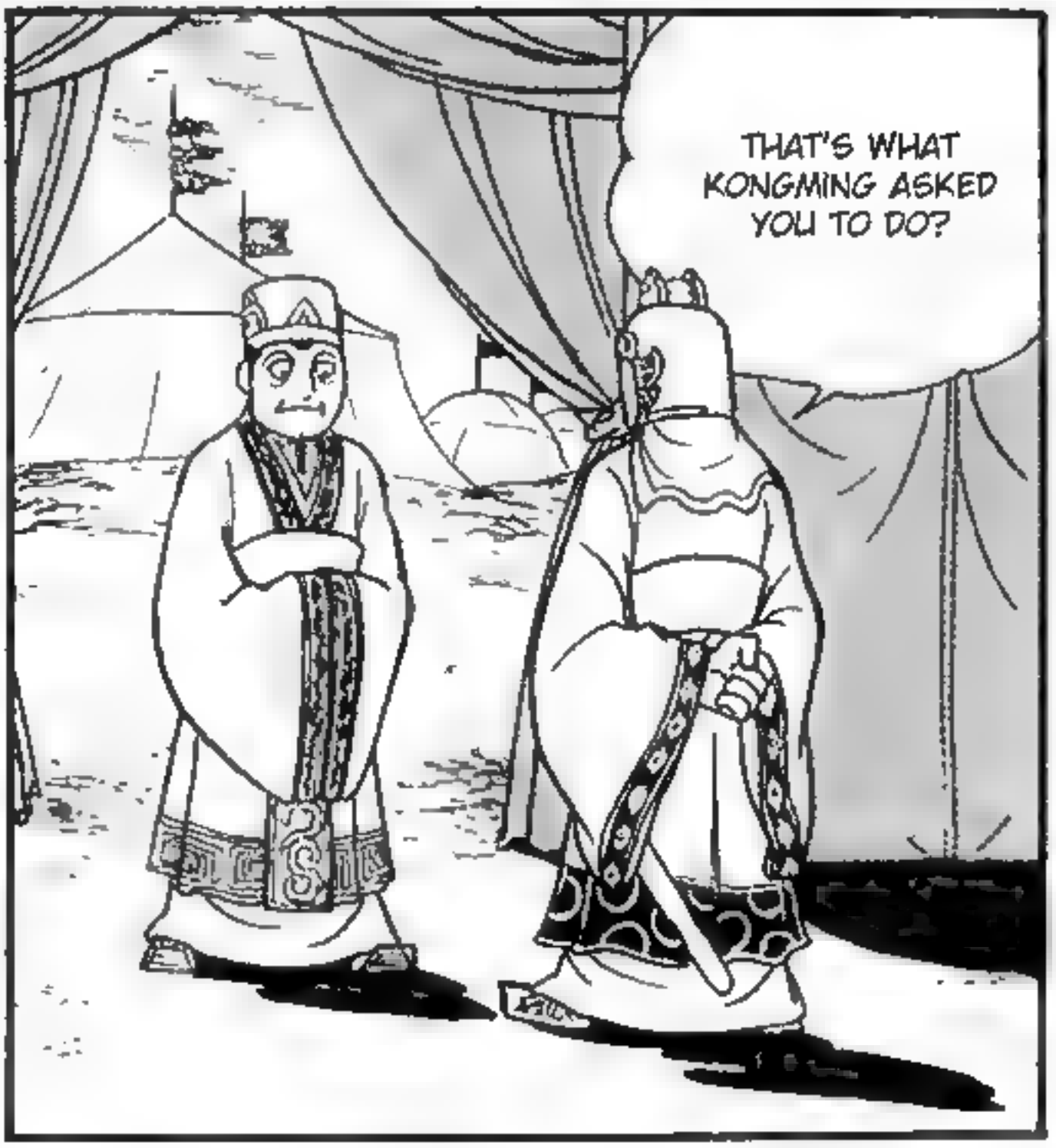
OF COURSE.

W-WAIT, COULD YOU PLEASE GIVE ME A MOMENT TO DECIDE?

THAT MUCH OF A REQUEST IS EASY ENOUGH TO FULFIL WITH MY AUTHORITY BUT JUST WHAT EXACTLY IS HE PLANNING...?



I CAN'T IMAGINE WHY HE'D NEED SUCH THINGS TO MAKE ARROWS...

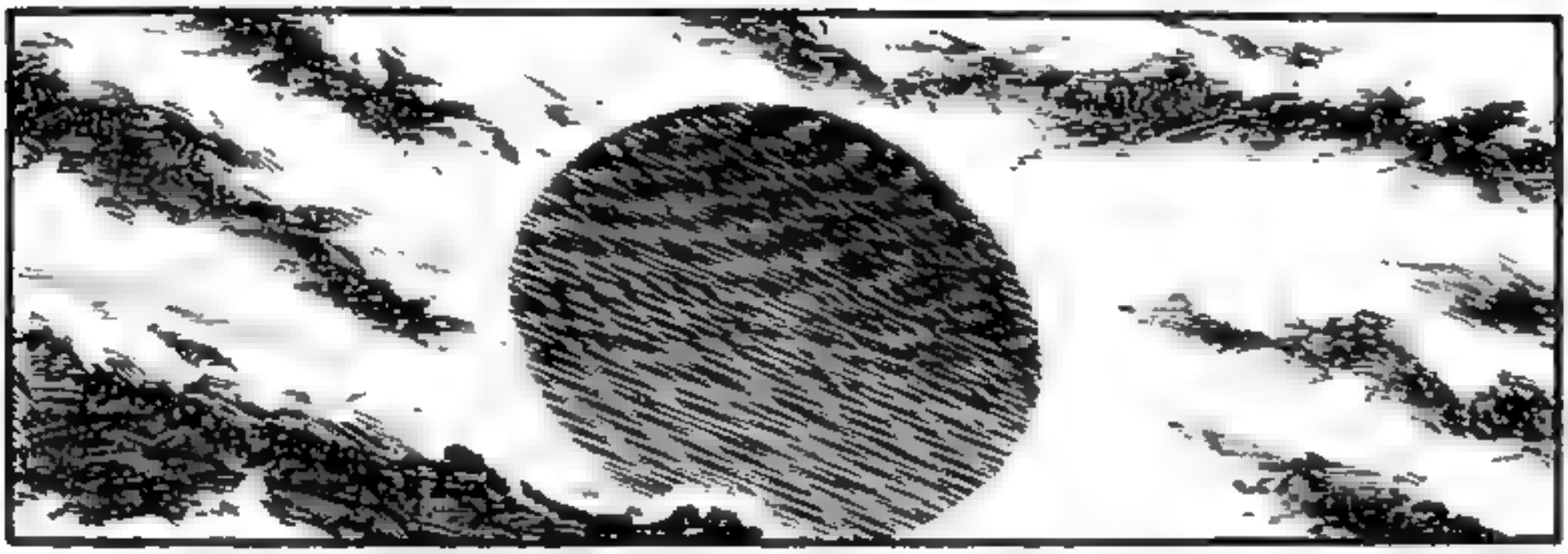

THAT'S WHAT KONGMING ASKED YOU TO DO?

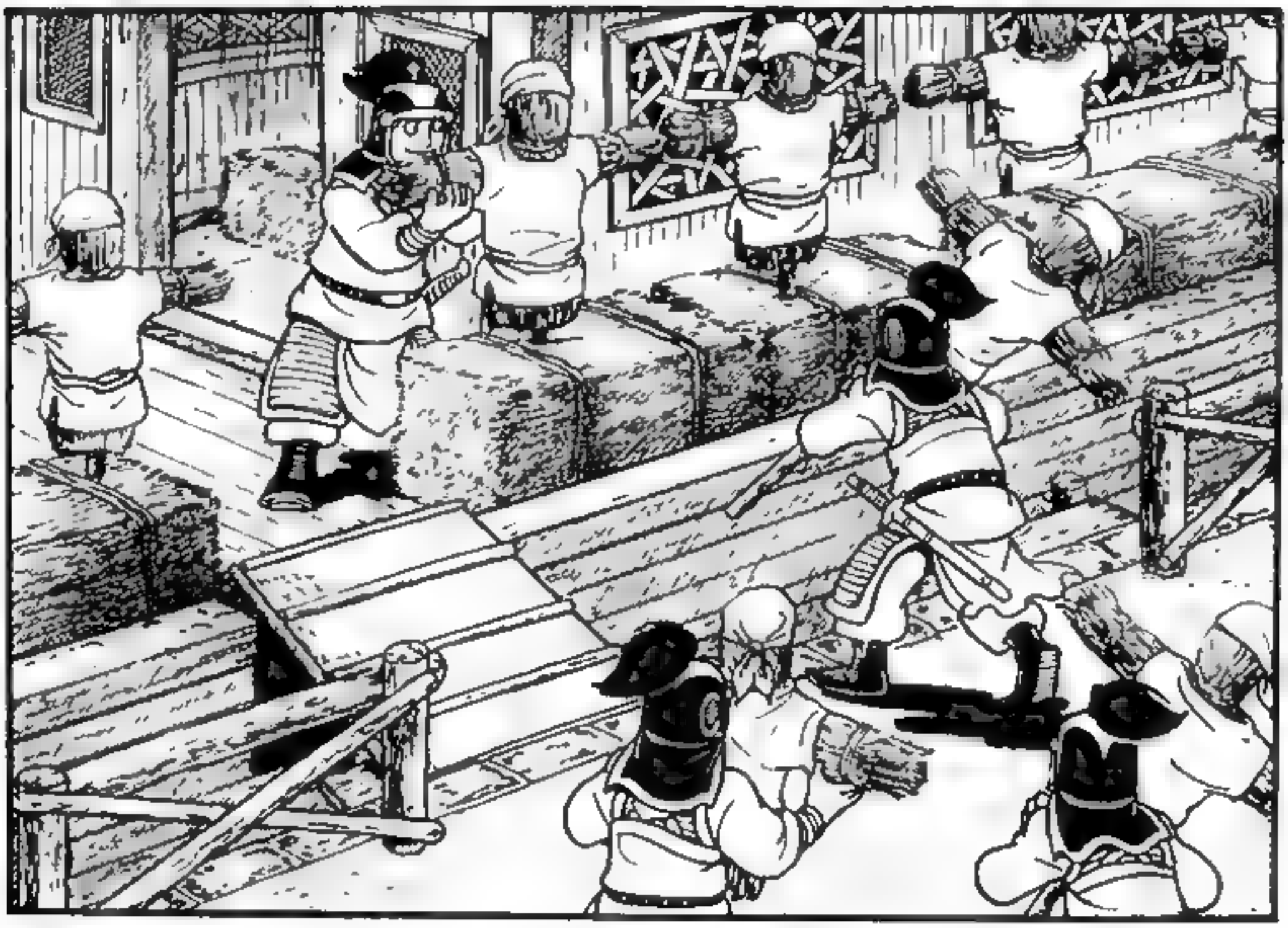
WHAT SHALL WE DO?

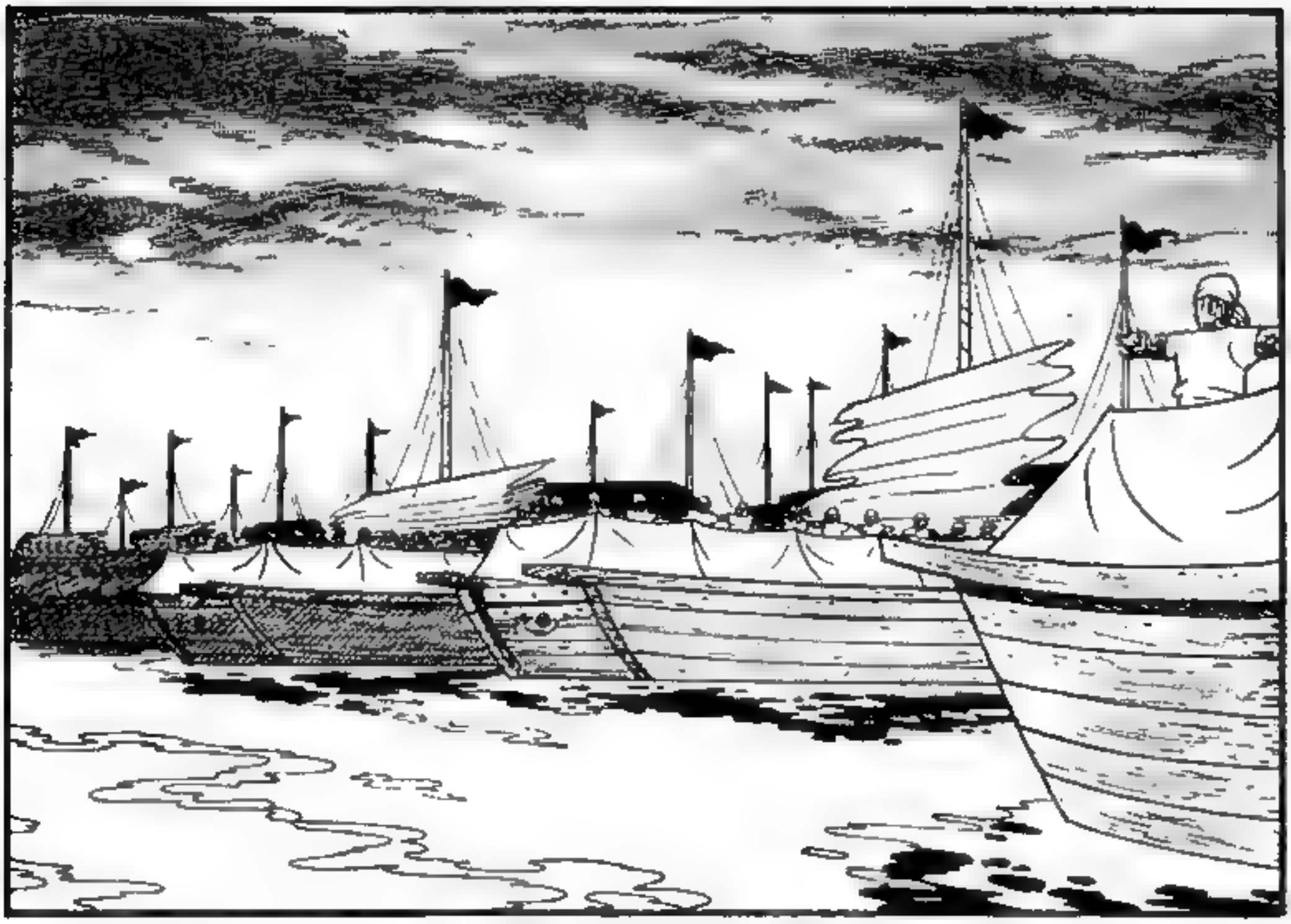
YOU MAY GRANT HIS REQUEST.

I'M A LITTLE CURIOUS AS TO SEE WHAT KONGMING IS PLANNING.

YES, ADMIRAL.
BUT BE EVER VIGILANT TO HIS ACTIONS.







IS HE SERIOUSLY THINKING OF MAKING ALL 100,000 ARROWS IN A SINGLE NIGHT...?

YES IT IS.
THE SHIPS AND SOLDIERS ARE NOW ALL PREPARED FOR KONGMING BUT THE PROMISED DAY IS TOMORROW.

GOOD EVENING, LU SU.
KONG-MING.

YES, OF COURSE.
YOU REALIZE THE PROMISED 3RD DAY IS TOMORROW, RIGHT?

TO CAO CAO'S BASE.

TO WHERE?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME ALONG?

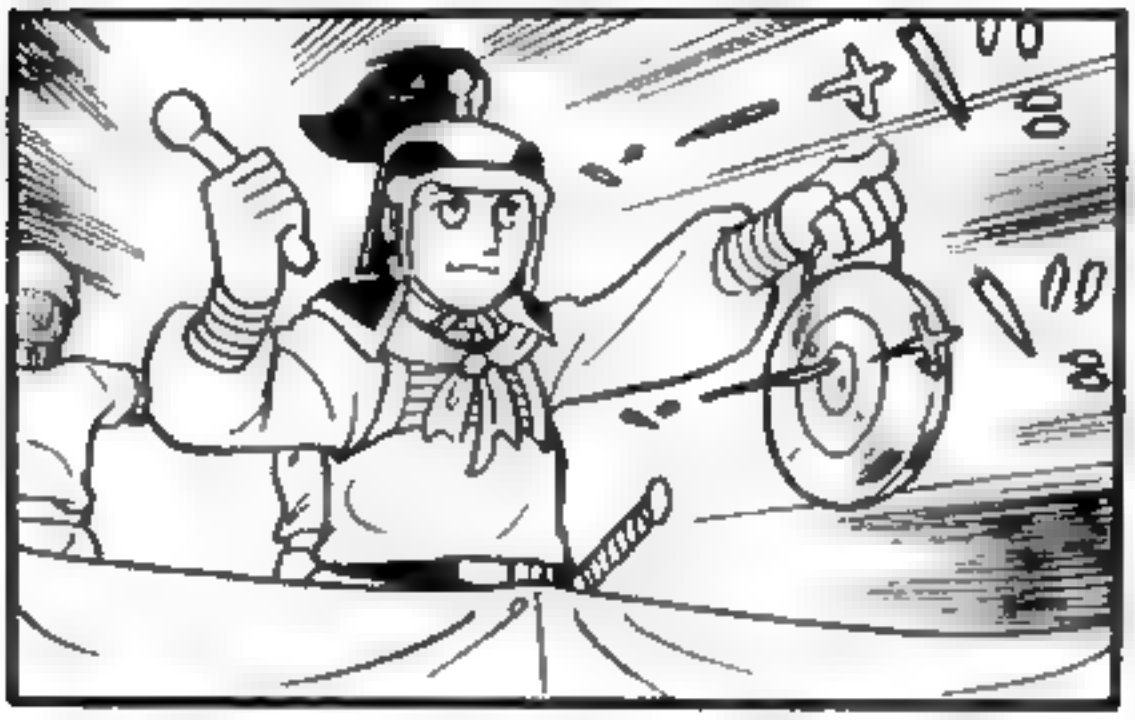
MAKE ARROWS?

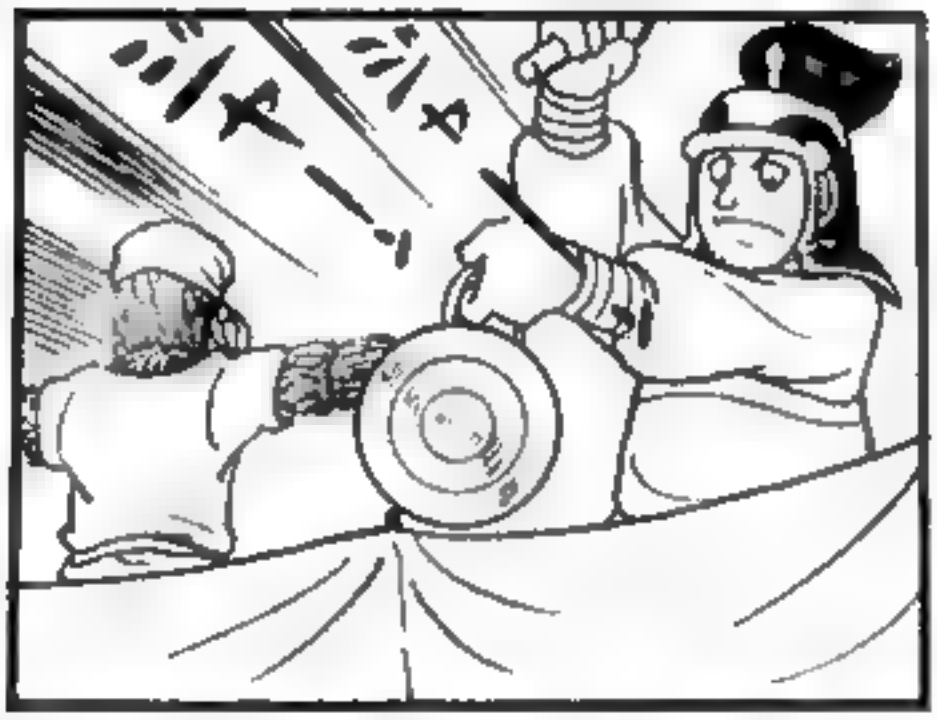
TO MAKE ARROWS, OF COURSE.

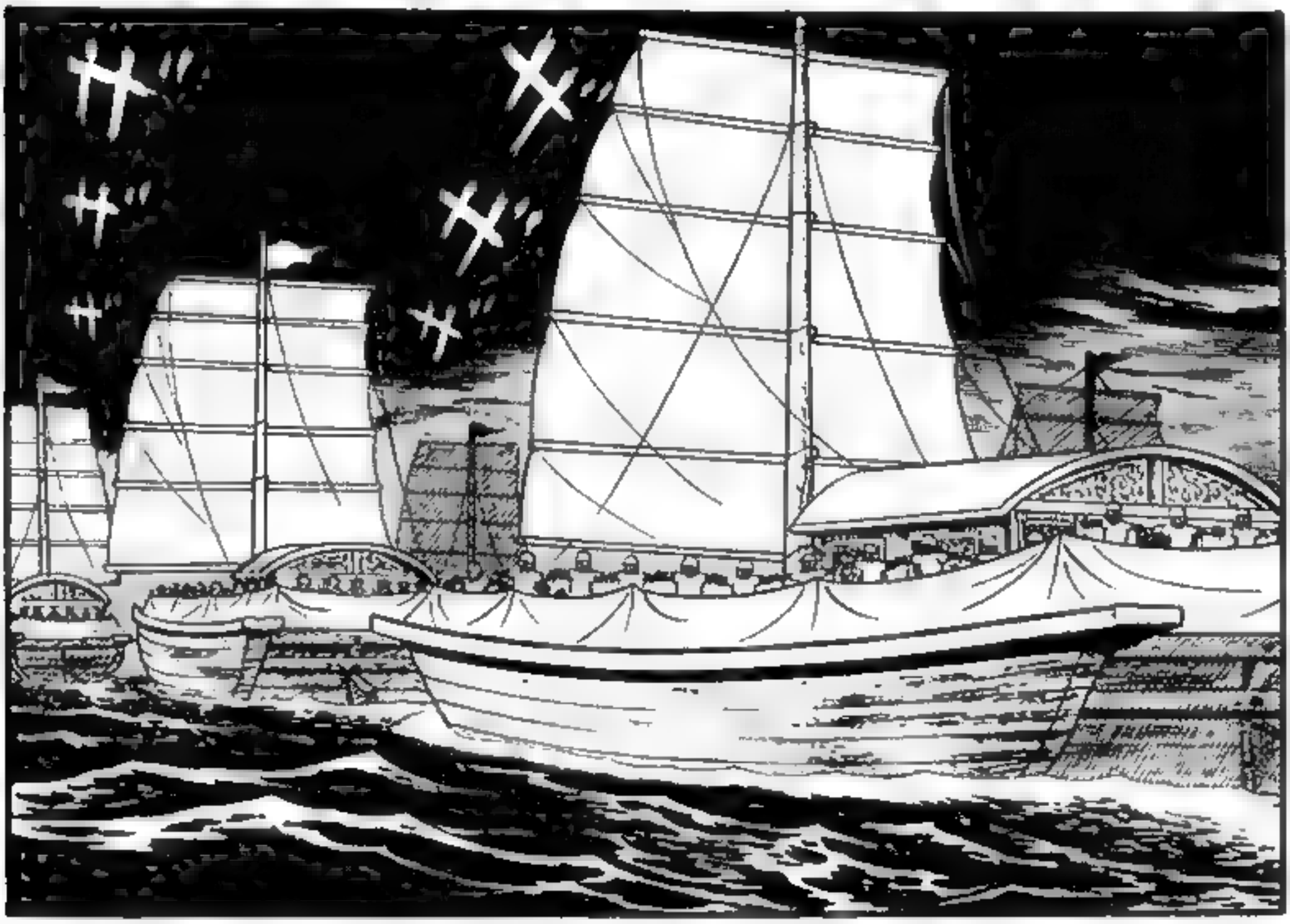
W-WHY WOULD WE GO TO THE ENEMY BASE?

SET SAIL!

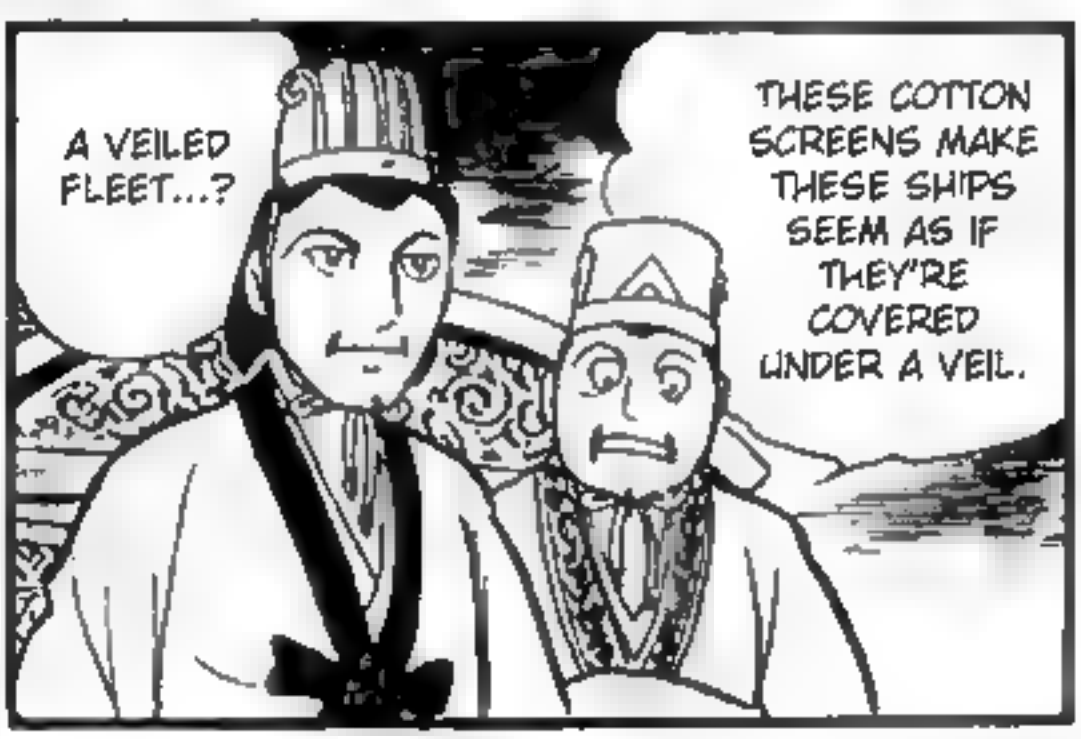
NO TIME TO WASTE, LET US BE OFF.





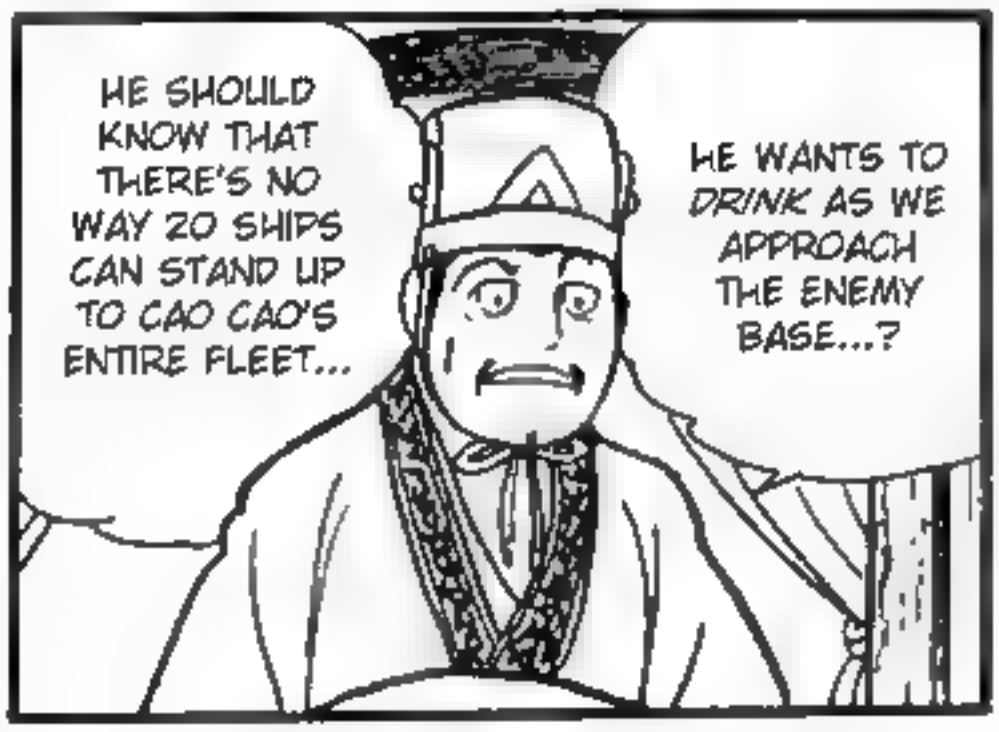


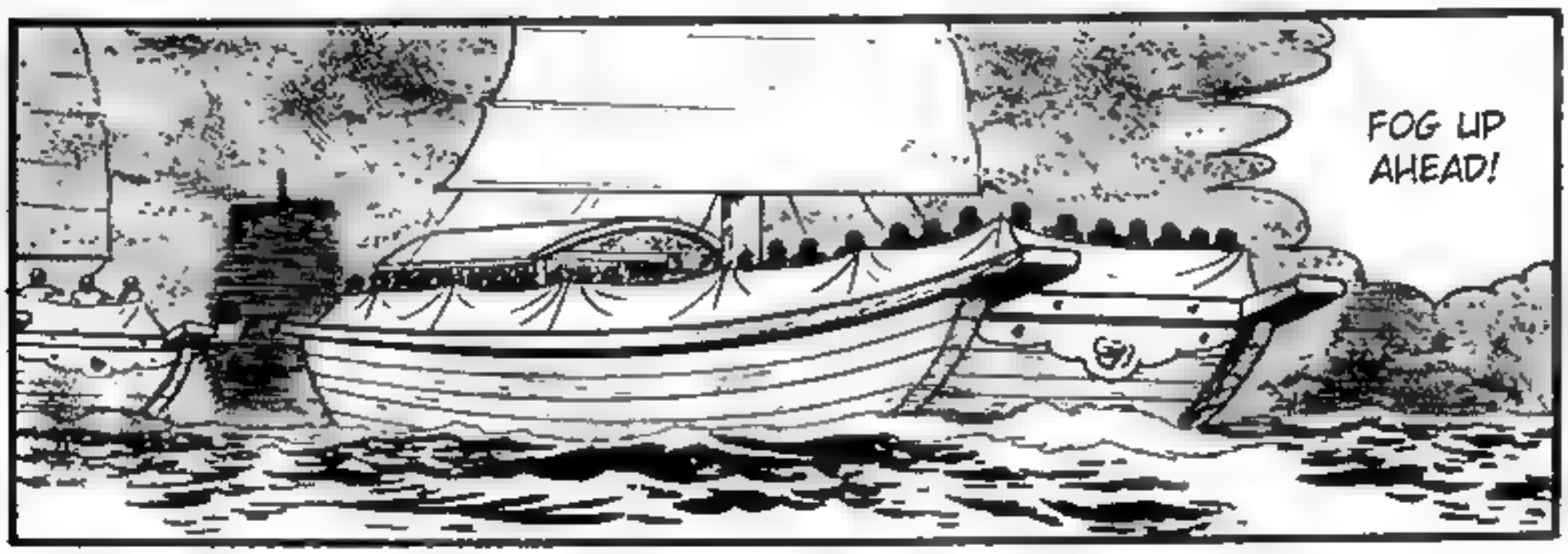
HAHAHA, WHAT AN AMUSING WAY TO PUT IT!

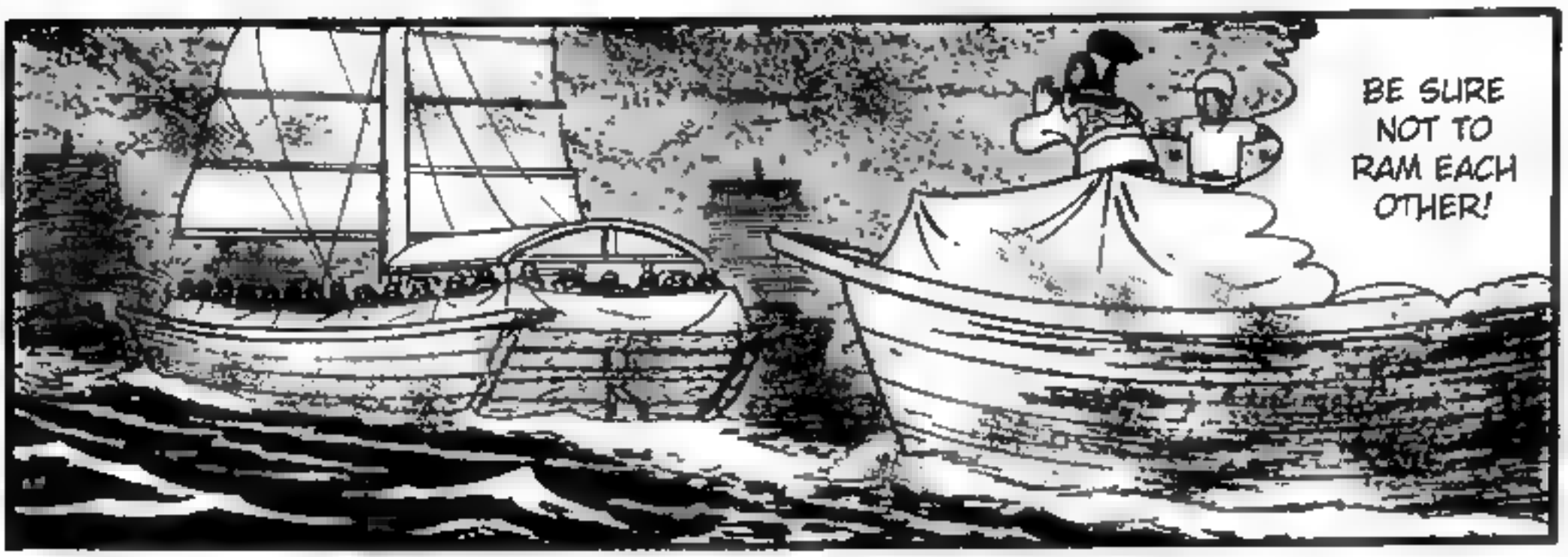

A VEILED FLEET...?
THESE COTTON SCREENS MAKE THESE SHIPS SEEM AS IF THEY'RE COVERED UNDER A VEIL.

WHY DON'T WE GO INSIDE AND ENJOY A DRINK WHILE WAITING TO REACH OUR DESTINATION?

HE WOULDN'T BE THINKING OF USING ME AS A HOSTAGE TO TAKE BACK TO LIU BEI NOW, WOULD HE...?


HE SHOULD KNOW THAT THERE'S NO WAY 20 SHIPS CAN STAND UP TO CAO CAO'S ENTIRE FLEET...
HE WANTS TO *DRINK* AS WE APPROACH THE ENEMY BASE...?


FOG UP AHEAD!


BE SURE NOT TO RAM EACH OTHER!

IT'S NIGHTS LIKE THESE THAT ARE ESPECIALLY DANGEROUS. TELL THE GUARDS TO TIGHTEN DEFENSES AND BE MORE ALERT.

YES, SIR.

WHAT THICK FOG THIS IS...

NO, I THINK I SHALL STAY UP A LITTLE *MORE* TONIGHT.

SINCE IT'S ALREADY LATE, MIGHT I SUGGEST THE CHANCELLOR TO GET A GOOD NIGHT'S REST?

ALL BECAUSE OF THE SLIGHTEST CARELESS MISTAKE.

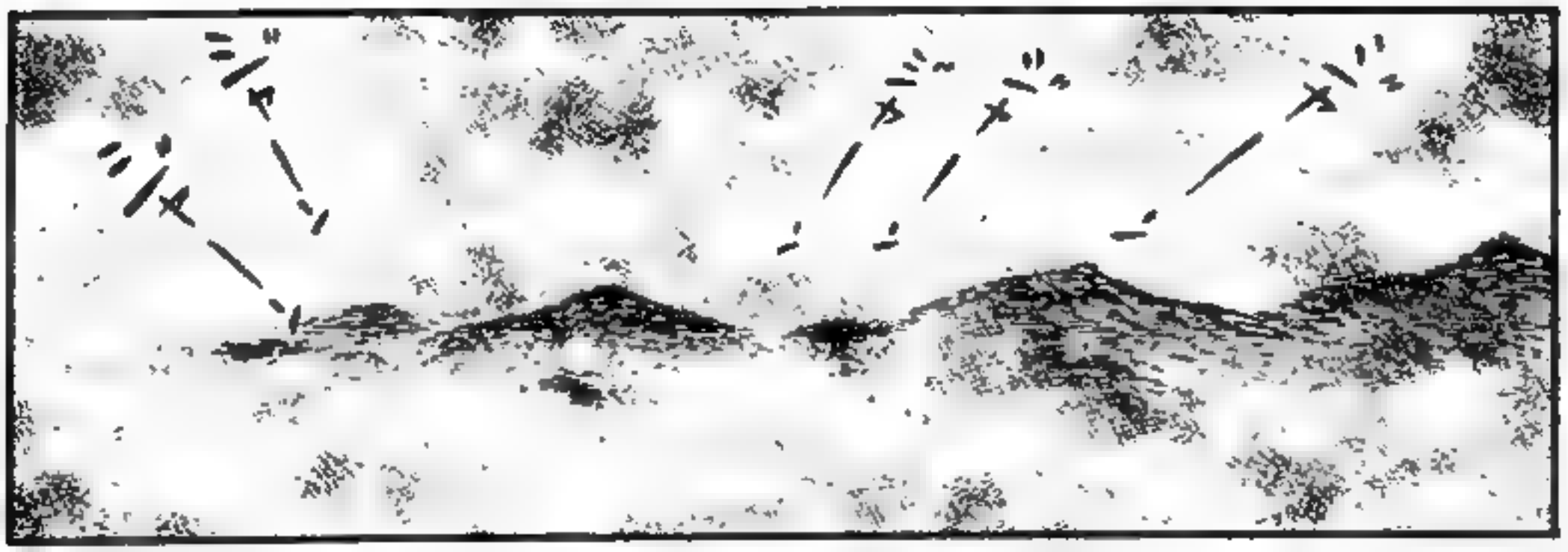
I'VE SEEN MANY OF MY LOYAL SUBORDI-NATES PERISH,

OUR ARMY NUMBERS A MILLION. THIS MUCH FOG IS NO REAL THREAT, CHANCELLOR.

AS EXPECTED OF YOUR GREAT WISDOM.

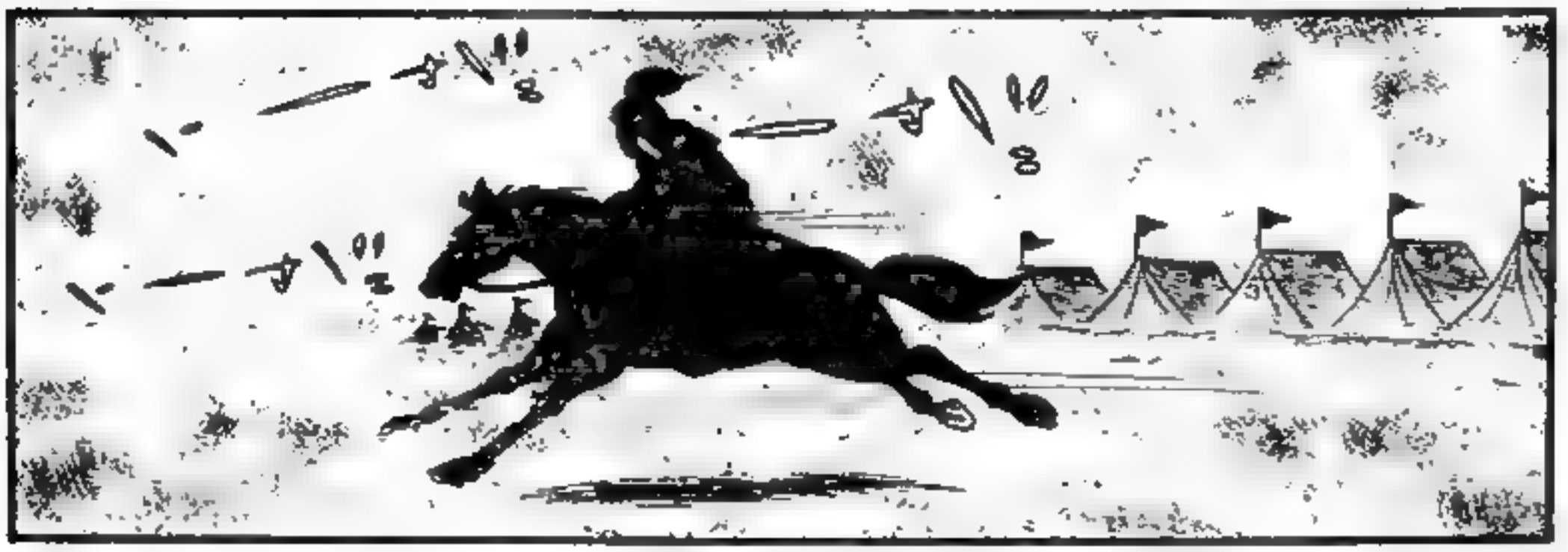
NO MATTER THE NUMERICAL ADVANTAGE, ONE MUST ALWAYS BE CAUTIOUS.

WE SHALL GLADLY STAY UP AS WELL AND ACCOMPANY YOU.



GO FIND OUT WHAT THAT NOISE IS.

YES, SIR.



IT'S AN ENEMY RAID!

WHAT'S THE CAUSE OF THIS NOISE!?

AH!

CHAN-CEL-LOR!

JUST AS I THOUGHT.

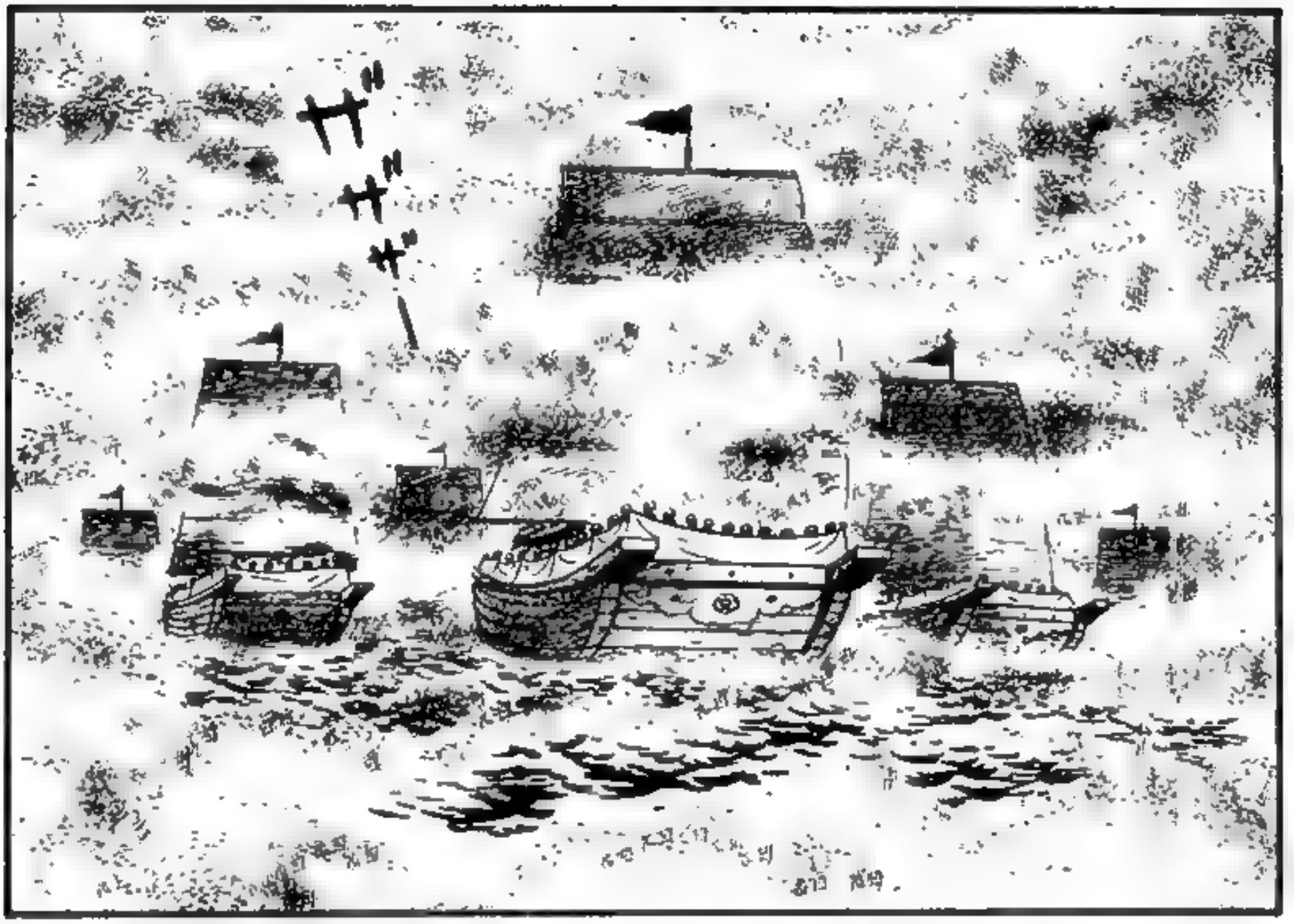
LET'S MOVE OUT!

THE NOISE IS FROM AN ENEMY RAID!

WHAT IS IT!?

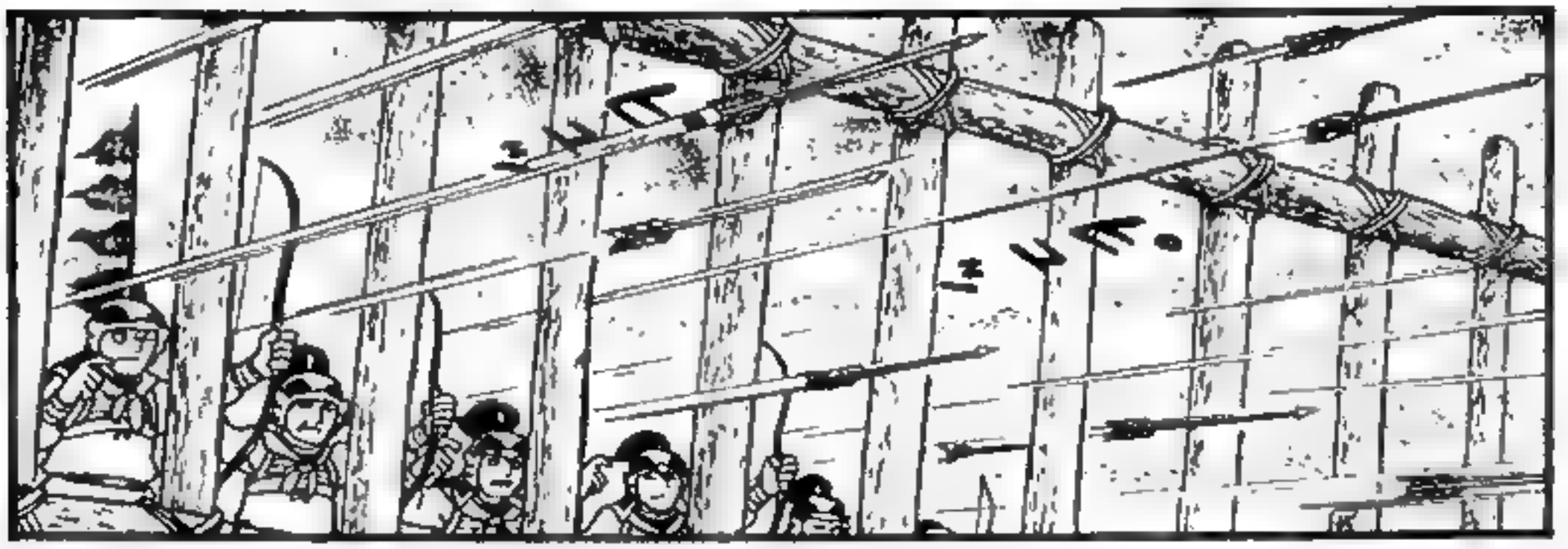
THEY'RE OVER THERE, SIR!

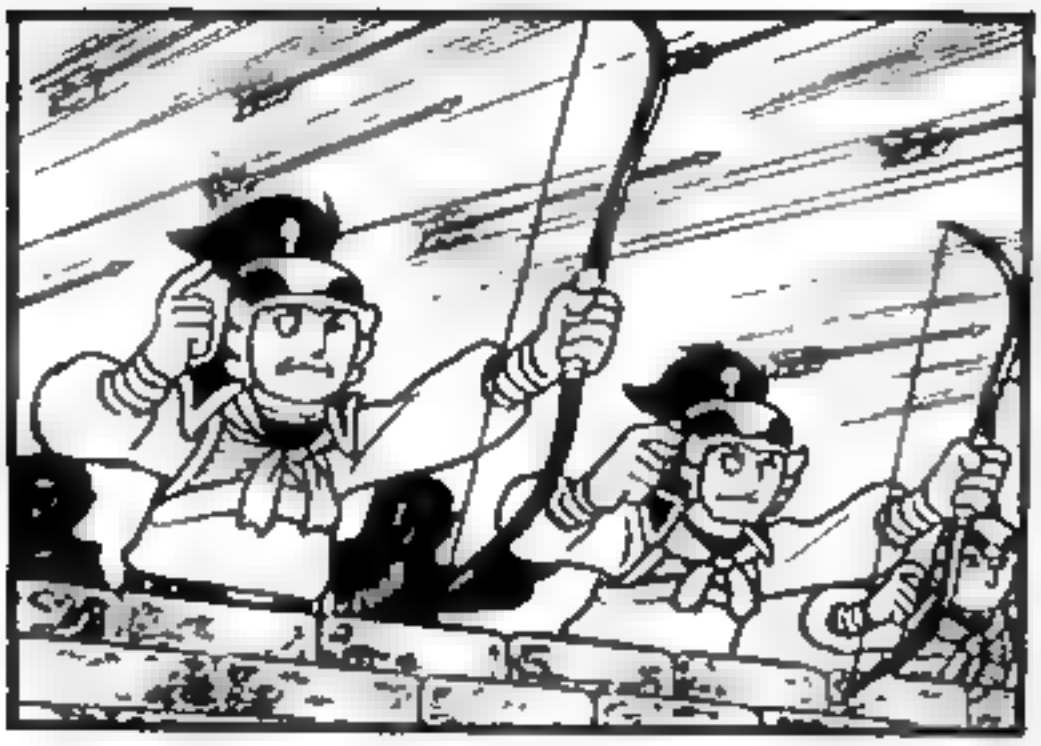
WHERE'RE THE ENEMIES!?

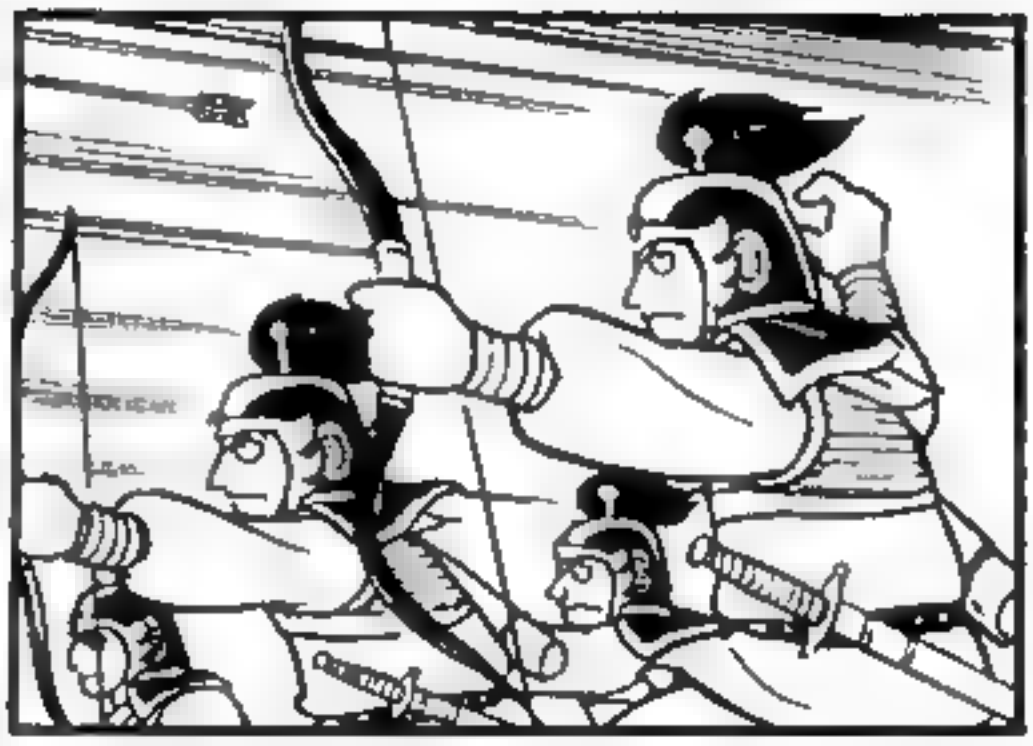


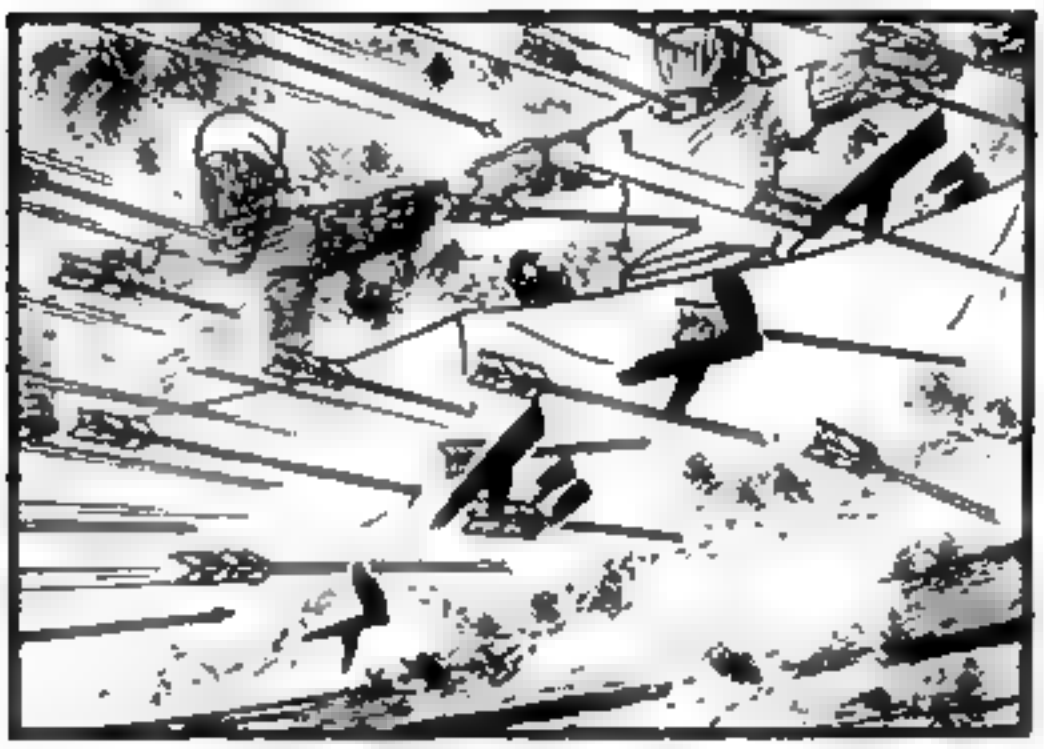
FIRE!

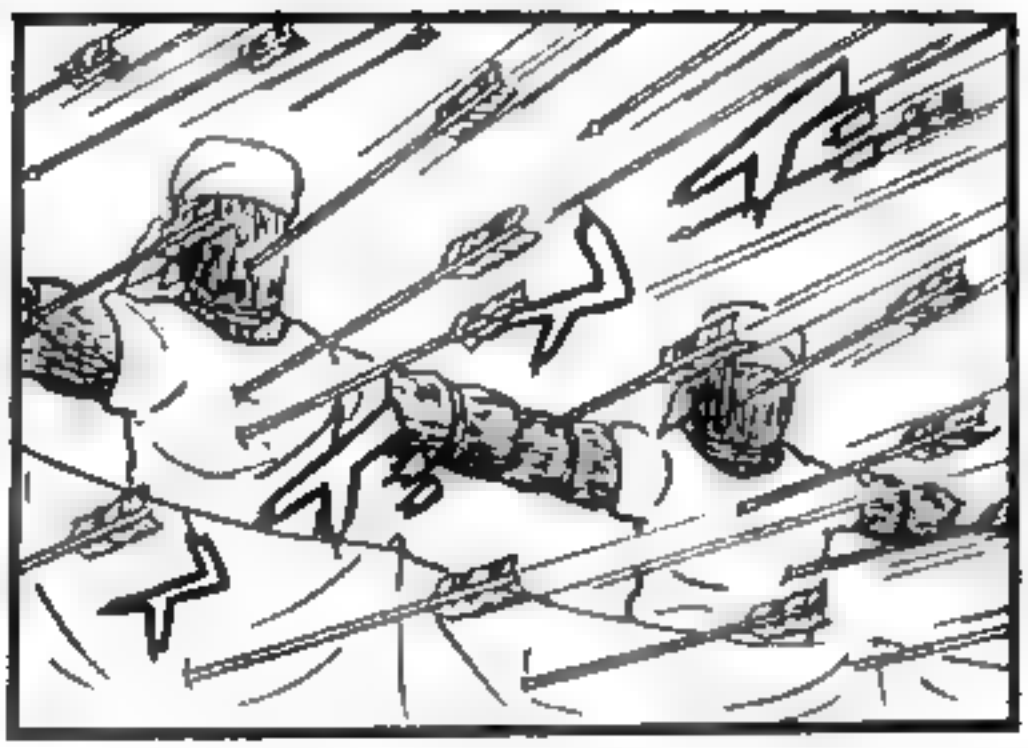
GIVE THEM
A RAIN OF
ARROWS!

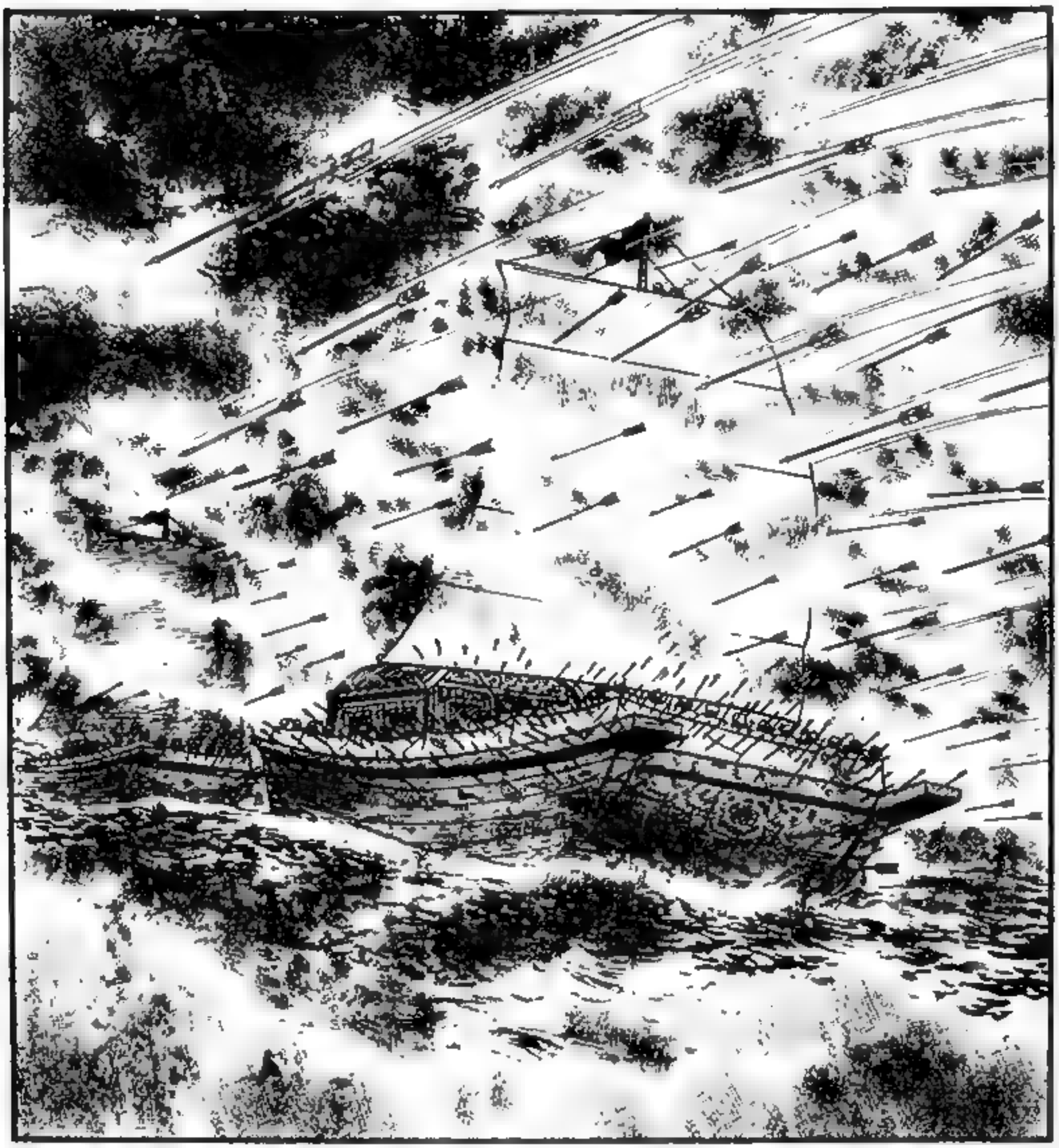




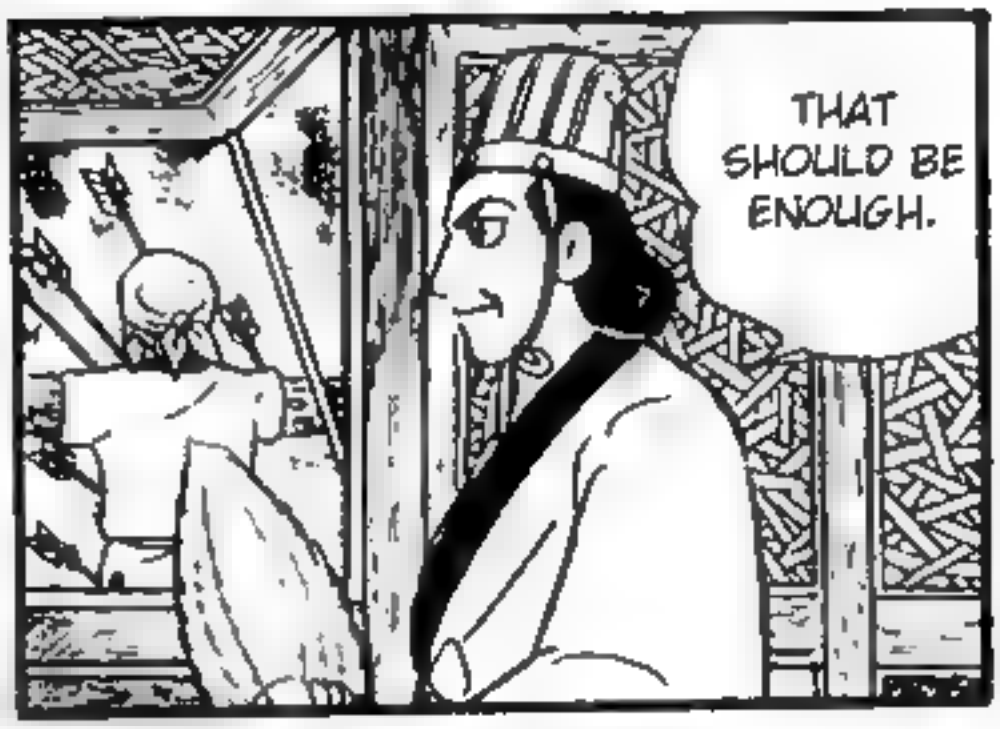


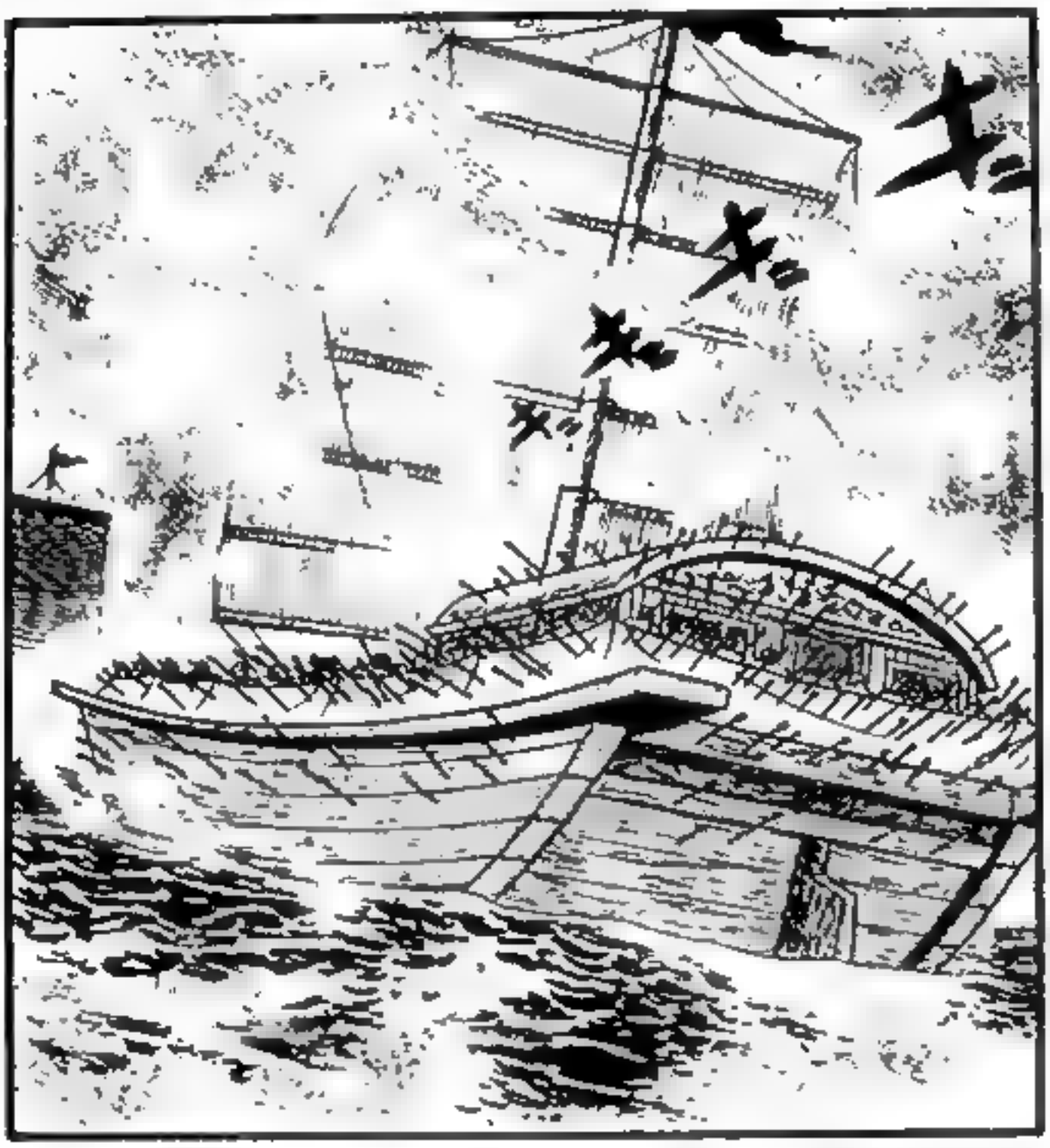






GIVE THE SIGNAL TO RETREAT.


THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH.



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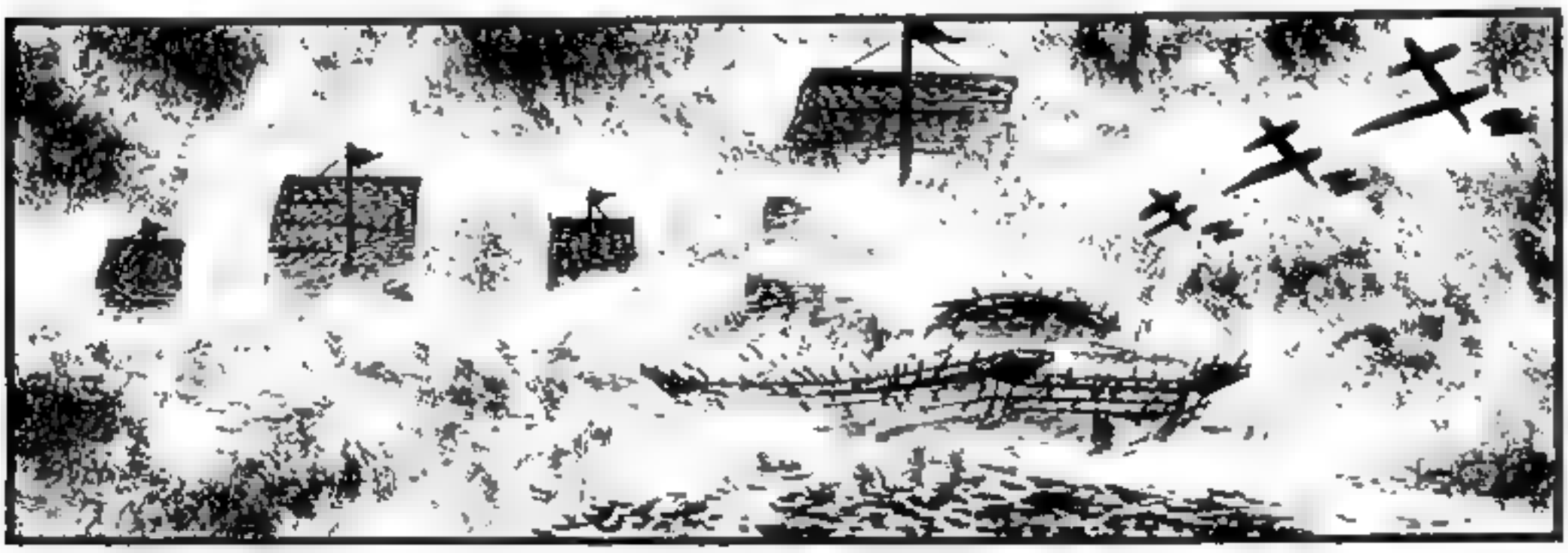


HOW MANY ARROWS DO YOU THINK WE CAUGHT?

HAHAHA, I WONDER HOW FURIOUS CAO CAO WILL BE WHEN HE FINDS OUT...

YES. NO MATTER HOW MANY ARROW-MAKERS AND BLACK-SMITHS I WERE TO EMPLOY, MAKING 100,000 ARROWS IN ONLY 10 DAYS WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE. AND EVEN IF IT WERE, I'M SURE ADMIRAL ZHOU YU WOULD'VE DONE SOMETHING TO INTERFERE SO I WOULD FAIL.

I... I CAN'T BELIEVE MY EYES! SO THIS IS WHAT YOU WERE AIMING FOR ALL ALONG!

EVEN A MERE ANIMAL CAN INSTINCTIVELY SENSE HOSTILITY. I COULD TELL WHAT ZHOU YU REALLY WANTED FROM THE TONE OF HIS REQUEST ALONE.

Y-YOU KNEW!?

AFTER ALL, ZHOU YU'S REAL INTENTION WASN'T TO MAKE ARROWS BUT TO TAKE MY HEAD.

YES I DID.

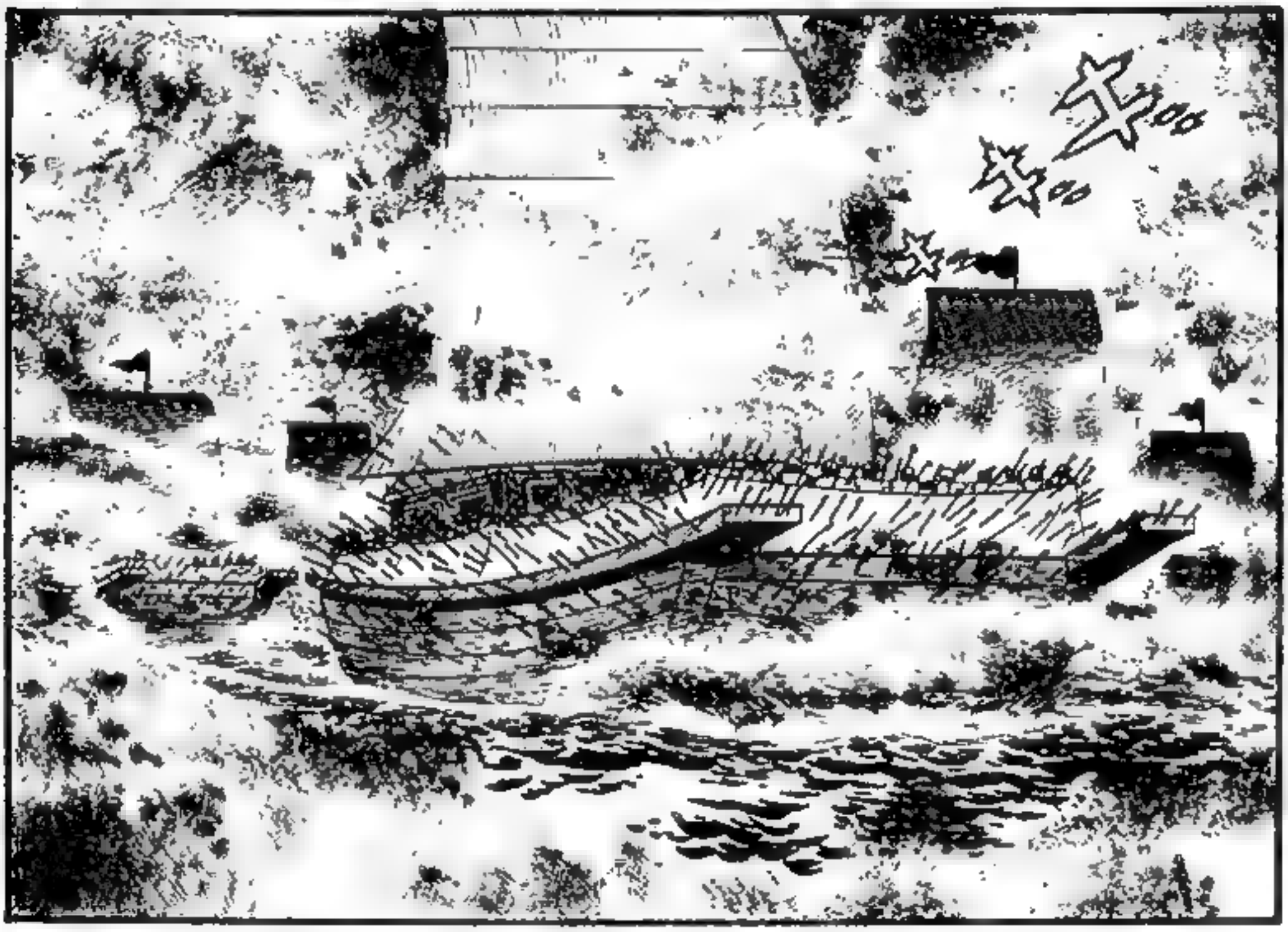
DID YOU ALSO KNOW THAT THERE WOULD BE FOG TONIGHT?

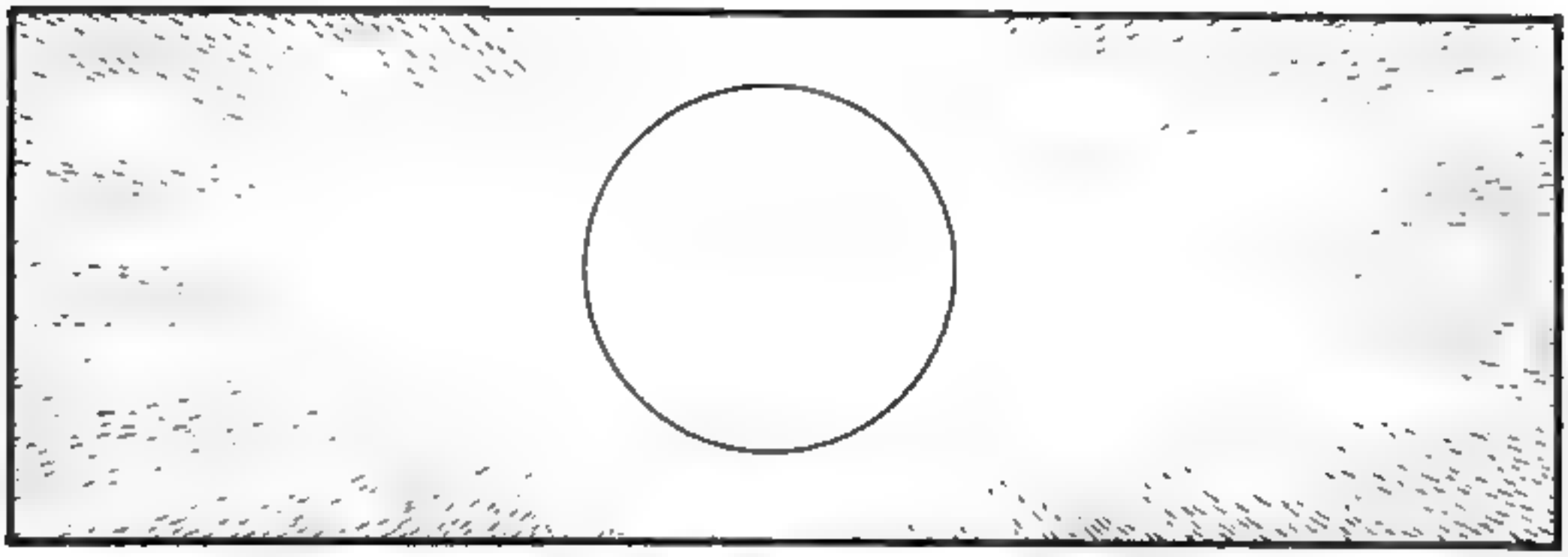
A FOG IS EASY ENOUGH TO PREDICT BY ACUTELY OBSERVING THE TEMPERATURE, WINDS, AND ATMOSPHERE.

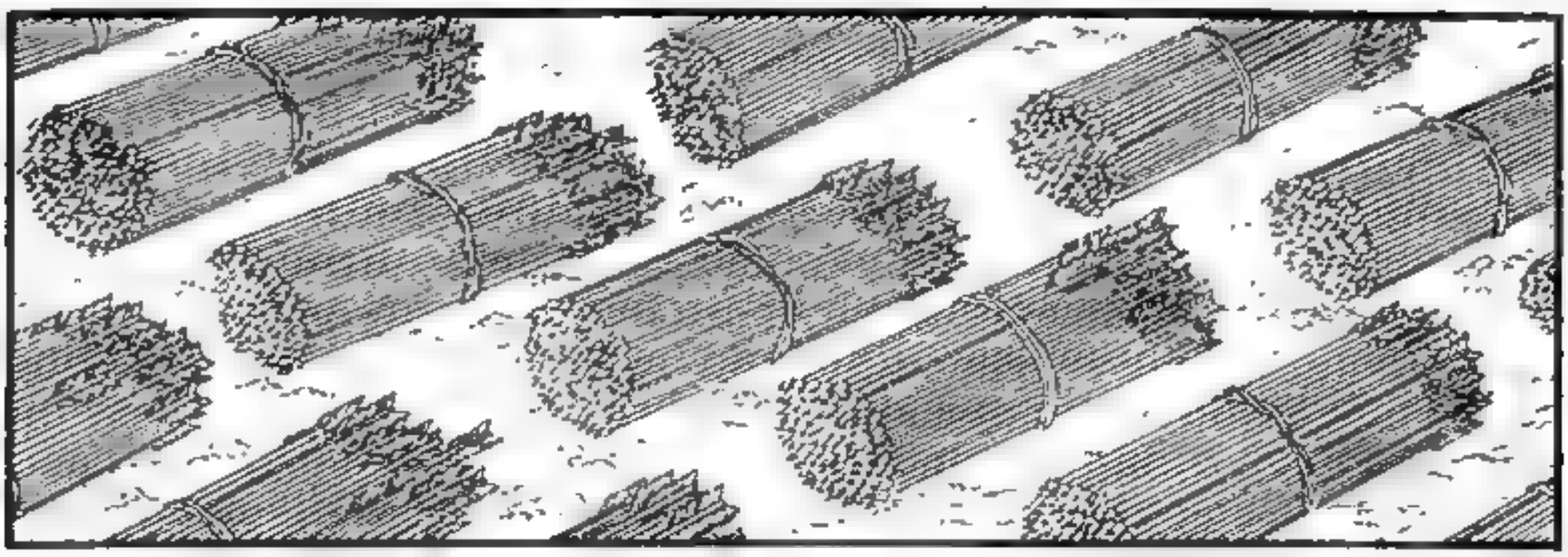
A SKILLED STRATEGIST MUST KNOW THE MOVEMENT OF THE HEAVENS AND THE WORKINGS OF THE TERRAIN.

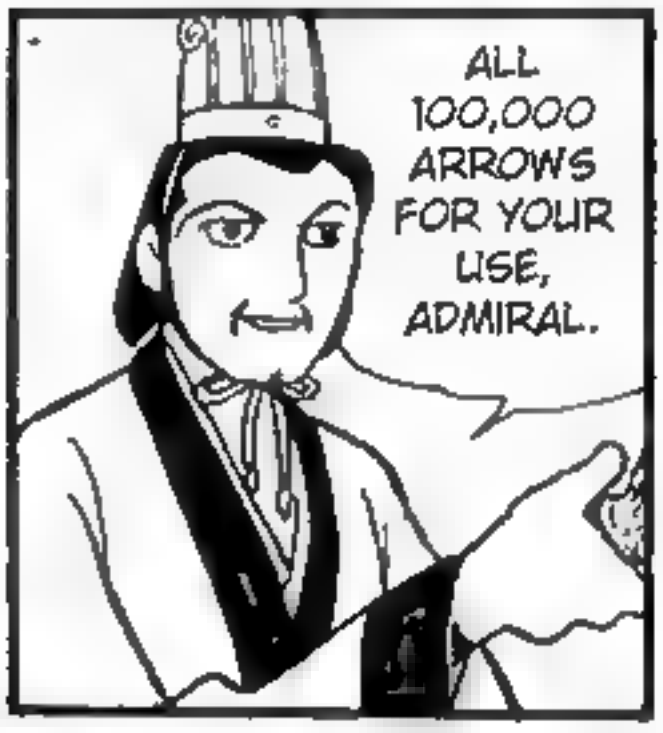
IT WAS ONLY BECAUSE I *COULD* PREDICT THE FOG THAT I ASKED TO HAVE THE TIME LIMIT SHORTENED. HAD I PROMISED ZHOU YU TO FINISH IN 10 DAYS BUT FINISH IN ONLY 3 DAYS, HE MAY USE THAT AS AN EXCUSE TO PUNISH ME.

EVEN AFTER TAKING OUT THOSE THAT ARE BROKEN, THERE SHOULD STILL BE MORE THAN 100,000 ARROWS.
I ASSUME THERE ARE 7 OR 8000 ARROWS STUCK ON EACH BOAT RIGHT NOW.








ALL 100,000 ARROWS FOR YOUR USE, ADMIRAL.

MOST IMPRE-SSIVE.

NOT AT ALL, IT WAS MERELY A SILLY OLD TRICK.

I AM TRULY AWED BY YOUR WIT.

BUT FIRST, PLEASE COME INSIDE.

THERE IS A MATTER I'D LIKE TO DISCUSS WITH YOU RIGHT NOW IF YOU DON'T MIND.

I RECEIVED A LETTER FROM MY LORD IN WHICH HE ASKED WHY I HAVEN'T MADE ANY REAL ATTACKS YET.

WHAT IS IT, ADMIRAL?

I WENT TO SPY OUT CAO CAO'S NAVAL FORTRESS A WHILE AGO, AND EVERYTHING WAS IN LINE WITH THE PROPER RULES OF NAVAL WARFARE. IT SEEMS MUCH TOO DANGEROUS TO DIRECTLY ATTACK, WHICH IS WHY I TURN TO YOU FOR ADVICE.

BUT TRUTH BE TOLD, I'M HAVING DIFFICULTY IN CONCEIVING A PLAN OF ATTACK.

I DO HAVE A CERTAIN IDEA...

HMM...

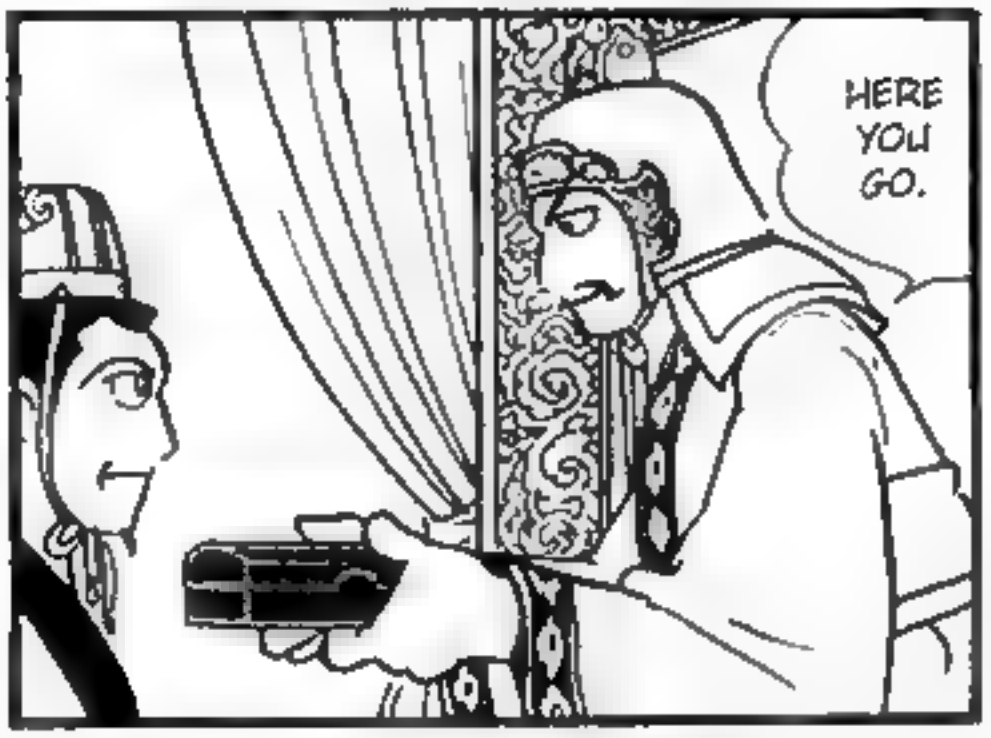
WHY DON'T WE WRITE DOWN OUR IDEA ON OUR PALMS AND THEN SHOW IT TO EACH OTHER AT THE SAME TIME?

TRUE, BUT...

BUT I'M SURE YOU MUST HAVE SOME IDEA OF YOUR OWN AS WELL, DO YOU NOT?

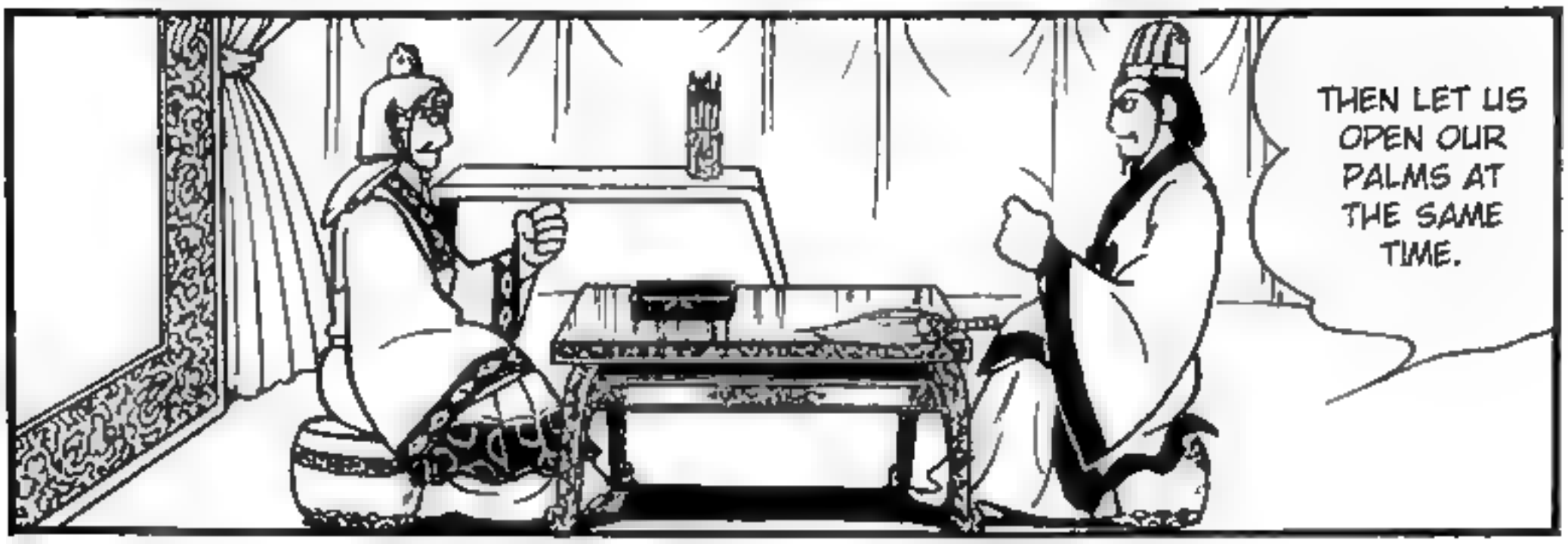
HMM, THAT SOUNDS INTERE-STING.

NOW THEN,


HERE YOU GO.

YES.
FINISHED?

TIME TO WRITE.


THEN LET US OPEN OUR PALMS AT THE SAME TIME.

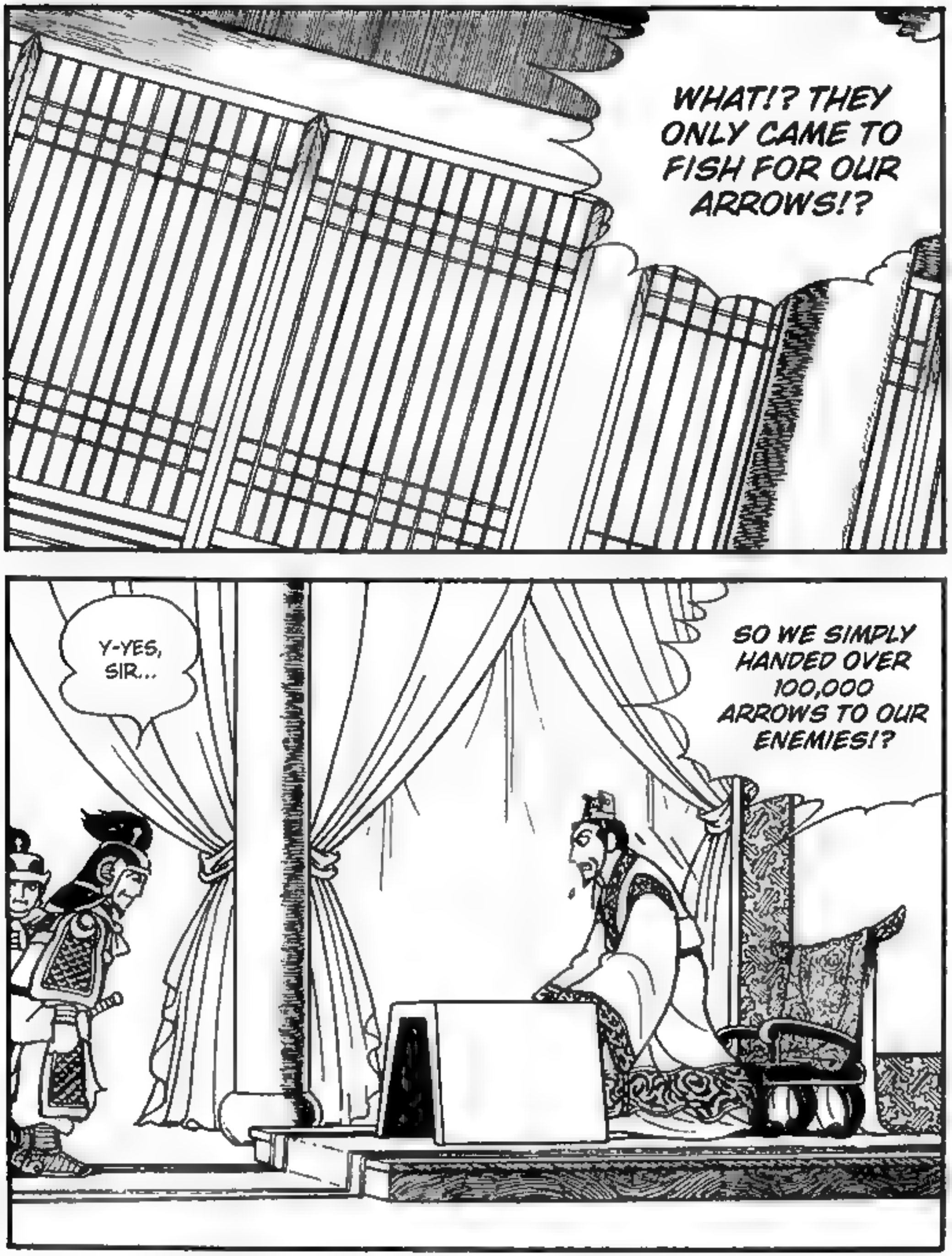
*火 READS "FIRE"

SO WE WERE THINKING THE SAME THING ALL ALONG!

HA HA HA HA HA

HA HA HA HA HA HA

POISONED BAIT



WITH BOTH KONGMING AND ZHOU YU AS OUR ENEMIES, WE MUST NOT MAKE ANY RECKLESS MOVES, MY LORD.

NGHH...

POISONED BAIT?

WHICH IS WHY I'D LIKE TO SUGGEST THE "POISONED BAIT" TRICK.

BUT DO WE EVEN HAVE ANYBODY THAT OUR ENEMIES WOULD TRUST?

THAT BAIT WILL BE OUR SIDE'S SOLDIERS THAT WILL PRETEND TO GO OVER TO THE ENEMY'S SIDE.

AS THE NAME IMPLIES, WE SHALL FEED THEM A POISONED BAIT.

CAI ZHONG AND CAI HE?

YES, ACTUALLY. THEY ARE CAI MAO'S COUSINS, CAI ZHONG AND CAI HE.

BECAUSE OUR ENEMIES KNOW THAT CAI MAO HAS BEEN EXECUTED UNDER MY LORD'S ORDERS, IT WOULD NOT BE UNSEEMLY FOR THE VICTIM'S COUSINS TO TURN TO THEIR SIDE.

THAT IS EXACTLY WHY THOSE TWO ARE THE ONLY ONES THAT CAN FOOL OUR ENEMIES.

BUT I'M SURE CAI ZHONG AND CAI HE BOTH HATE ME FOR KILLING THEIR UNCLE. WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THEY WERE TO REALLY SURRENDER?

BUT MY LORD MUST STILL STRENGTHEN THEIR LOYALTY WITH PROMISES OF PROMOTIONS AND WEALTH.

I SEE.

BUT TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTION, WITH THE REST OF THE CAI FAMILY STILL LIVING IN JINGZHOU WHICH REMAINS UNDER MY LORD'S CONTROL, I DOUBT THEY WOULD DARE TO BETRAY US.

ALRIGHT THEN, CALL FORTH CAI ZHONG AND CAI HE AT ONCE.

HM...

YES, MY LORD.

THE POISONED BAIT, IS IT? IT JUST MIGHT WORK...

GOOD EVENING, CAI ZHONG AND CAI HE.

I HAVE CALLED YOU HERE TONIGHT TO ASK WHETHER YOU WISH TO WASH AWAY THE TAINT ON YOUR FAMILY LEFT BY YOUR UNCLE.

IF YOU DO, I HAVE A SPECIAL TASK THAT CAN ONLY BE DONE BY YOU TWO. THE MISSION IS TO INFILTRATE THE ENEMY ARMY BY PRETENDING TO SURRENDER.

YES, OF COURSE.

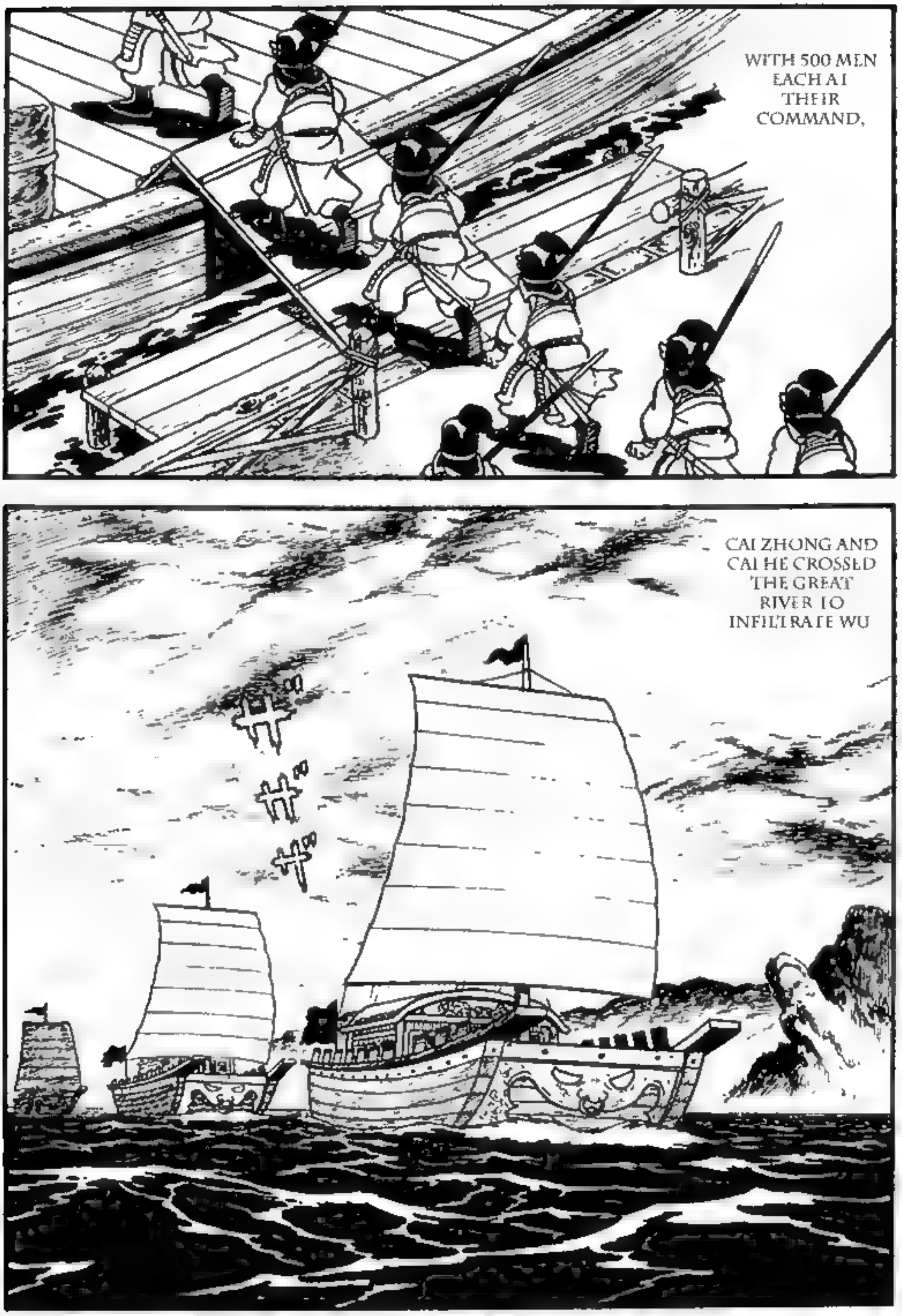
COULD WE REALLY ACCOMPLISH SUCH A THING?

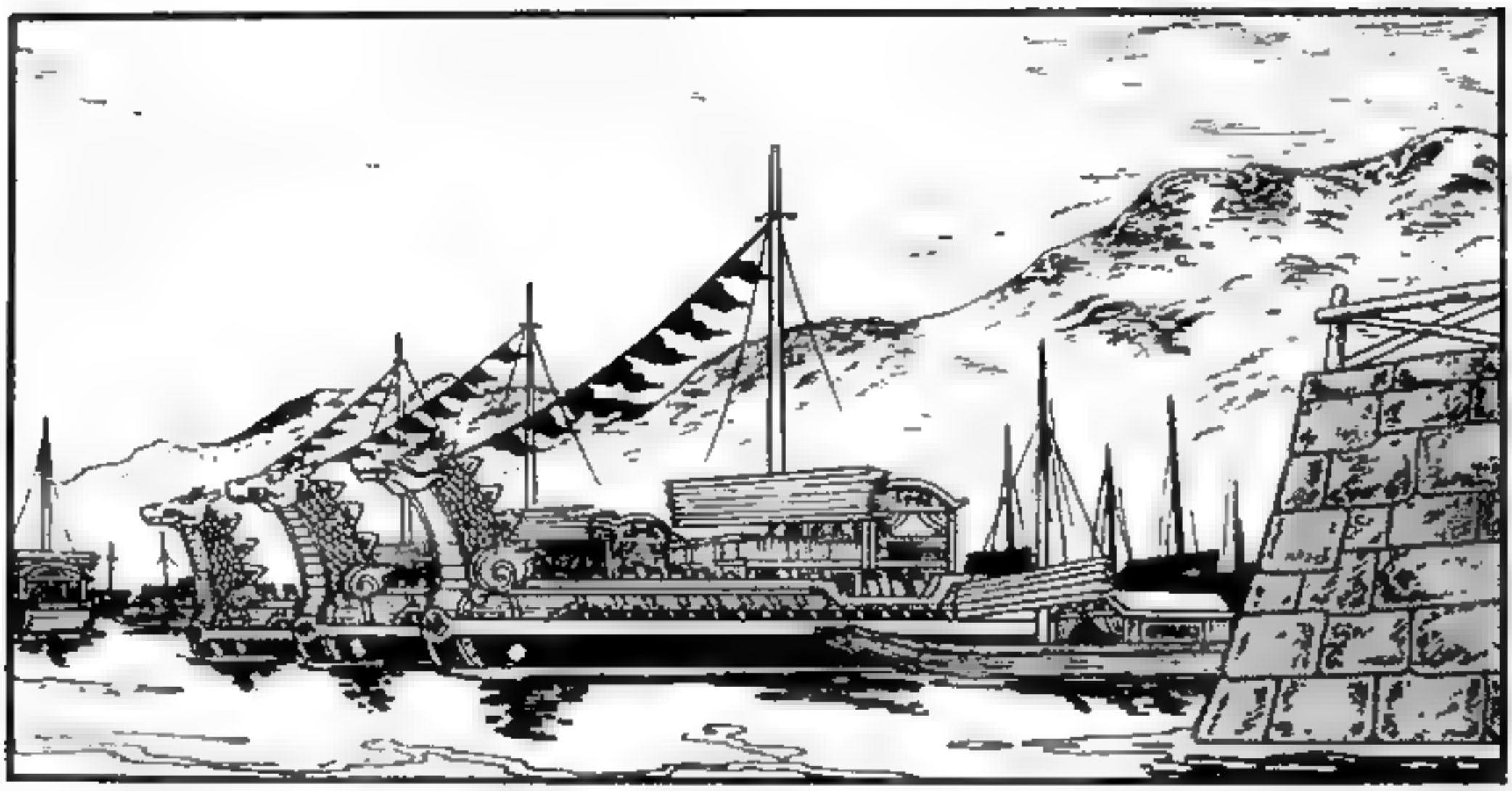
YOUR UNCLE CAI MAO WAS EXECUTED UNDER MY ORDERS. AS SUCH, IT WOULD MAKE MORE THAN ENOUGH SENSE FOR OUR ENEMIES TO SEE WHY YOU TWO WOULD BETRAY ME AND GO OVER TO WU.

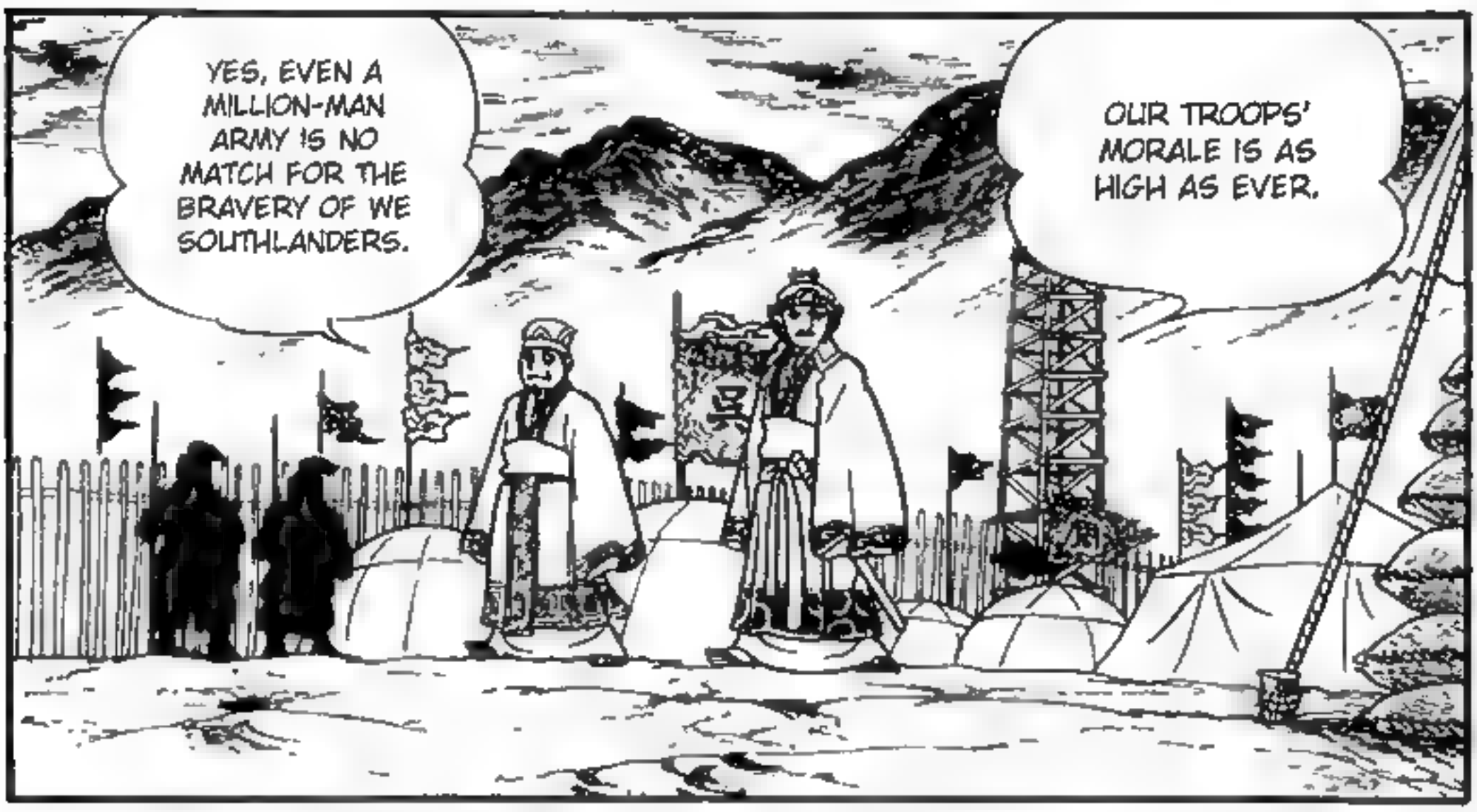
GOOD. SUCCEED AND I SHALL REWARD YOU GREATLY.

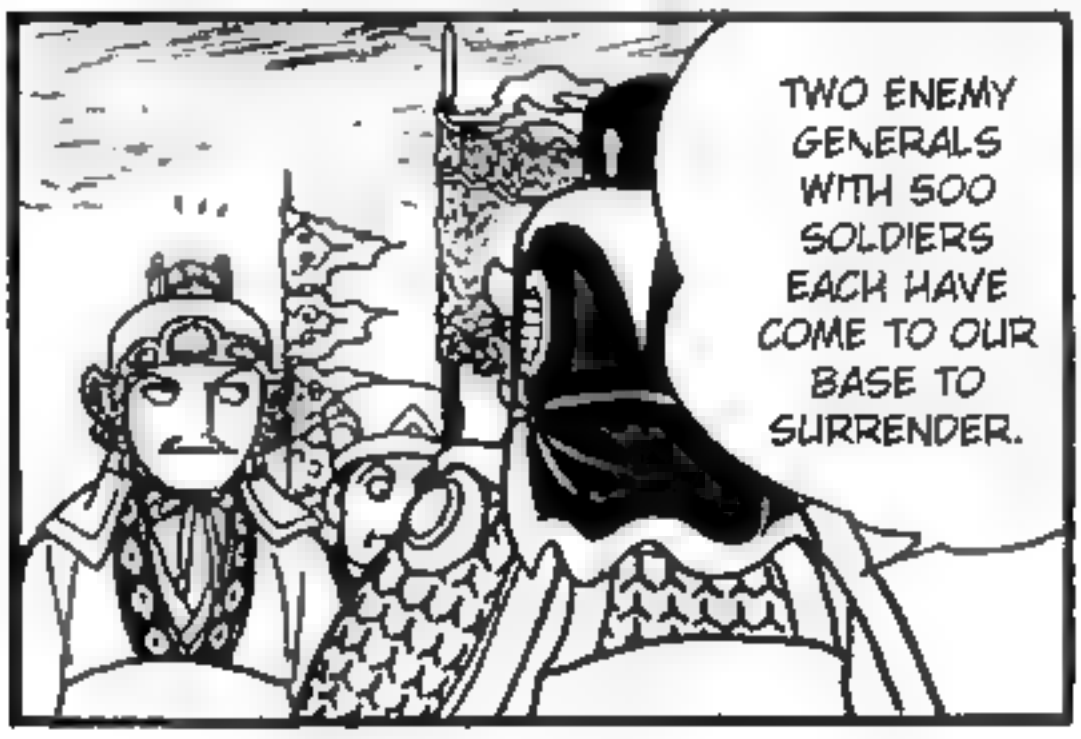
PLEASE ALLOW US TO WIPE AWAY THE TAINT LEFT BY OUR UNCLE.

WE SHALL DO OUR BEST, CHANCELLOR.


WITH 500 MEN EACH AT THEIR COMMAND,
CAI ZHONG AND CAI HE CROSSED THE GREAT RIVER TO INFILTRATE WU




YES, EVEN A MILLION-MAN ARMY IS NO MATCH FOR THE BRAVERY OF WE SOUTHLANDERS.
OUR TROOPS' MORALE IS AS HIGH AS EVER.


TWO ENEMY GENERALS WITH 500 SOLDIERS EACH HAVE COME TO OUR BASE TO SURRENDER.

ADMI-RAL!

THEY SAID THEIR NAMES WERE CAI ZHONG AND CAI HE.

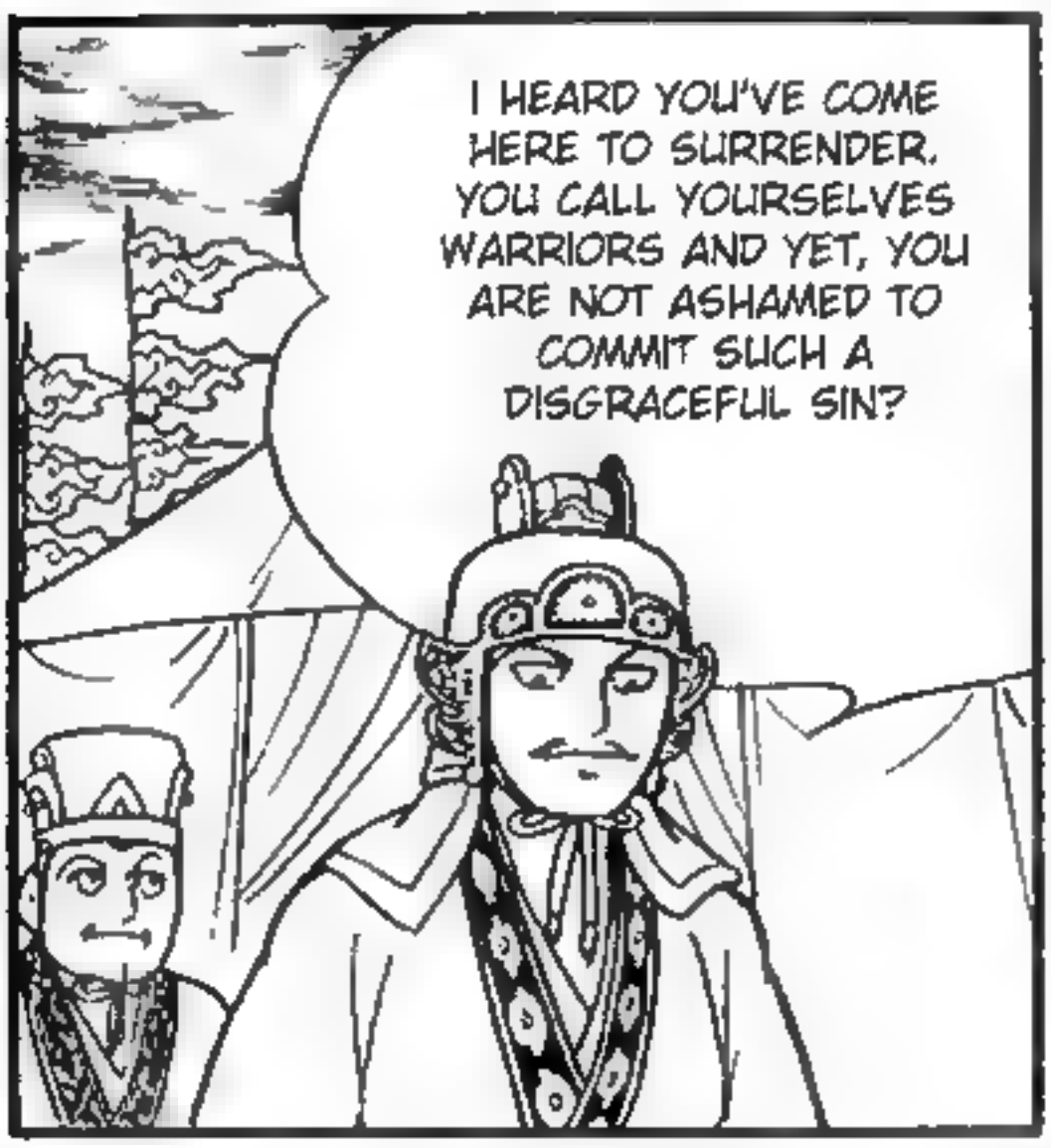
THEY WISH TO SURRENDER...? JUST WHO ARE THESE GENERALS?

YES, SIR.

BRING THEM IN HERE AT ONCE.

THIS WAY, SIRS.

THESE ARE THE MEN, ADMIRAL ZHOU.


I HEARD YOU'VE COME HERE TO SURRENDER. YOU CALL YOURSELVES WARRIORS AND YET, YOU ARE NOT ASHAMED TO COMMIT SUCH A DISGRACEFUL SIN?

I AM CAI HE AND THIS HERE IS CAI ZHONG.

COU-SINS?

WE ARE COUSINS OF CAI MAO, WHO WAS RECENTLY EXECUTED BY CAO CAO.

ALL WE WISH FOR IS A BATTLEFIELD TO DIE AS WARRIORS AND A CHANCE FOR REVENGE.

OUR UNCLE WAS AN INNOCENT MAN WHO WAS WRONGLY CHARGED BY THE CHANCELLOR AND EXECUTED. NOT ONLY THAT, CHANCELLOR CAO CAO DOUBTS THE LOYALTY OF EVERY SINGLE MEMBER OF THE CAI FAMILY.

I GRACIOUSLY ACCEPT YOUR OFFER TO HELP WU FIGHT OFF CAO CAO.

OF COURSE, OF COURSE. IF YOU ARE CAI MAO'S COUSINS THEN THAT WOULD ONLY BE LOGICAL.

THANK YOU, ADMIRAL ZHOU YU...

DO YOU THINK IT'S SAFE TO SO EASILY TRUST THOSE MEN?

AHAHAHA!

YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I THAT CAI MAO WAS FALSELY CHARGED. IT'S ONLY UNDERSTANDABLE THAT THEY WOULD RESENT CAO CAO FOR IT. THERE'S NOT A THING TO BE SUSPICIOUS ABOUT.

I BETTER CONSULT KONGMING ABOUT THIS MATTER...

AH, WHAT IS IT, LU SU?

KONGMING!

DON'T YOU THINK ZHOU YU'S BEING TOO CARELESS?

AH, I JUST HEARD WORD OF THAT.

CAI MAO'S TWO COUSINS HAVE COME TO SURRENDER AND THE ADMIRAL ACCEPTED THEM WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST DOUBT.

HAHAHA.

NEEDLESS? WHATEVER DO YOU MEAN?

A NEEDLESS WORRY, LU SU.

WHAT!

IT'S OBVIOUS THAT THOSE TWO GENERALS ARE LYING.

RIGHT NOW, BOTH SIDES ARE MORE OR LESS LOCKED IN A STALEMATE. ADMIRAL ZHOU MUST SEE THIS AS AN IDEAL CHANCE TO BREAK THE STALEMATE.

SO THEN... HE ACCEPTED THEM KNOWING THAT THEY'RE STILL ON THE ENEMY'S SIDE?

IF THEY REALLY INTENDED TO SURRENDER, THEY WOULD HAVE BROUGHT ALONG THEIR WIFE AND CHILDREN. I'M SURE ADMIRAL ZHOU HAS SEEN THROUGH THAT MUCH.

I WOULD ASSUME HE'S ONLY PRETENDING TO FALL FOR THEIR LIES IN ORDER TO HAVE THEM FALL FOR A LIE OF HIS OWN...

NOW DO YOU SEE WHY INSTEAD OF WORRYING, WE OUGHT TO BE SMILING?

I AM ASHAMED AT MY PITIFUL SELF FOR FAILING TO SEE THROUGH THE SIMPLEST OF TRICKS.

I JUST CAN'T KEEP UP WITH EITHER OF THEM...

YES...

NOW, NOW. LET US THROW SUCH DEPRESSING THOUGHTS AWAY AND LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING WHAT ZHOU YU HAS IN STORE.

DECEIVING THE DECEIVERS

AND THUS, I'VE COME WITH A WAY THAT COULD DELIVER A CRITICAL STRIKE TO THEIR FLEET.

AS WE SIT STILL, CAO CAO IS TRAINING HIS NAVY BIT BY BIT. WE WILL CLEARLY BE MORE AND MORE DISADVANTAGED THE LONGER THIS WAR DRAGS ON.

WE SHALL USE FIRE TO BURN DOWN EVERY LAST ONE OF THEIR SHIPS.

TRUTH BE TOLD, I ALREADY HAD THE SAME IDEA.

NO, I THOUGHT OF IT MYSELF.
DID ANYBODY HAPPEN TO SUGGEST THAT IDEA TO YOU?

YES, BUT THE PROBLEM IS HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OUT OF A FIRE ATTACK ESPECIALLY WHEN THE ENEMIES ARE HOLED UP IN THEIR FORTRESS.

YOU HAVE!?

YOU SEE, ENEMY GENERALS CAI HE AND CAI ZHONG HAVE TURNED ON CAO CAO TO JOIN OUR FORCES. A BOLD-FACED LIE THOUGH, OBVIOUSLY.

FORTUNATELY, THE HEAVENS HAVE PRE-SENTED ME WITH A CHANCE.

WHAT?

AND WHAT DO YOU HAVE IN MIND?

I'VE TAKEN THEM IN FOR THE TIME BEING WHILE I COME UP WITH AN IDEAL PLAN.

BUT THE QUESTION IS, WHO DO I ASK TO FAKE A SURRENDER TO CAO CAO...

I AM THINKING OF USING THEM TO PLANT ONE OF OUR OWN MEN INSIDE THE ENEMY BASE.

THAT'S A SIMPLE QUES-TION.

I MAY BE OLD BUT IN MY LIFETIME, I HAVE LOYALLY SERVED 3 GENERATIONS OF THE SUN FAMILY. I WOULD GLADLY DO ANYTHING TO SAVE MY HOMELANDS.

TO YOU?

JUST LEAVE THAT TASK TO ME.

IN ORDER TO CONVINCINGLY TRICK CAO CAO, MY PLAN CALLS FOR A RATHER PAINFUL COURSE OF ACTION...

WELL, I DO NOT DOUBT YOUR LOYALTIES BUT...

THANK YOU, HUANG GAI.

I AM WILLING TO HANDLE ANY AMOUNT OF PAIN.

LEND ME YOUR EAR...

SO WHAT'S THE PLAN?

WHISPER WHISPER

GENTLEMEN, I HAVE CALLED YOU HERE TODAY NONE OTHER THAN TO TELL YOU THAT THE TIME FOR OUR GRAND ATTACK DRAWS NEAR. EACH OF YOU IS TO LOAD UP 3 MONTHS SUPPLY OF FOOD ON YOUR SHIPS.

SO IT FINALLY BEGINS...

WHAT IS IT, HUANG GAI?

WAIT RIGHT THERE!

NEED I REMIND YOU THAT I AM THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF? IT IS MY JOB TO DECIDE THESE MATTERS.

HOW COULD YOU DECIDE ON SUCH A CRITICAL MATTER WITHOUT EVEN CONSULTING THE REST OF US GENERALS!?

WHAT!? ARE YOU IMPLYING THAT THE BATTLE IS LOST EVEN BEFORE WE'VE FOUGHT!?

BUT YOU'VE STILL YET TO COME UP WITH AN EFFECTIVE PLAN TO DESTROY CAO CAO'S ARMY, WHICH I MIGHT REMIND YOU, OUTNUMBER OUR FORCES BY THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS!

YES THAT'S RIGHT. YOUR CARELESSNESS WILL ONLY COST THE LIVES OF OUR TROOPS!

YOU MAY HAVE MY LORD'S TRUST, BUT I SHALL NOT STAND BY TO SEE YOU LEAD WU TO RUIN!

ARE THOSE WORDS TRULY COMING FROM A GENERAL WHO HAS SERVED THREE GENERATIONS OF THE SUN FAMILY!?

OF COURSE! ONLY A BLIND SHEEP WOULD FOLLOW A COMMANDER THAT CAN'T EVEN PLAN.

YOU DARE DEFY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF'S ORDERS...!?

AN UPSTART RUNT LIKE YOU DARES TO TAKE THE HEAD OF A FAITHFUL GENERAL WHO'S SERVED WU FOR 3 GENERATIONS!?

YOU ARE NOT ONLY A COWARD BUT A TRAITOR TO OUR LORD! GUARDS, OFF WITH HIS HEAD!

OH, I DARE TO, ALRIGHT!

HUANG GAI IS AN ACCOM-PLISHED GENERAL, YOU MUST NOT EXECUTE HIM.

SIR, STOP!

I BEG OF YOU, SIR.

PLEASE CONSIDER HIS PAST CONTRI-BUTIONS AND PARDON HIM JUST THIS ONCE.

AN ACCOMPLISHED COWARD, THAT'S WHAT HE IS!

BUT REFUSAL TO OBEY ORDERS IS A SERIOUS OFFENCE. I SENTENCE HUANG GAI TO 100 BLOWS WITH WOODEN STICKS.

FINE, I SHALL SPARE HIM HIS LIFE ALONE JUST THIS ONCE.

NGH...

GUARDS!

CARRY OUT HIS PUNISHMENT AT ONCE! REFUSE AND YOU SHALL SUFFER THE SAME FATE!

SHUUU

UGH!

AGH!

SHUUU

GAH!

47...!
48...!

KONGMING, YOU KNOW THAT ZHOU YU RESPECTS YOUR OPINION THE MOST. WHY WON'T YOU PERSUADE HIM TO STOP THIS CRUELTY?

LET US NOT NEEDLESSLY INTERFERE.

NEEDLESSLY INTERFERE?

KONG-MING?

YES, SO WHY SHOULD I STOP ZHOU YU FROM TRICKING OUR ENEMIES?

WHAT!

THIS IS CLEARLY A RUSE TO SHOW CAI ZHONG AND CAI HE THAT OUR SIDE IS PLAGUED WITH INTERNAL CONFLICTS.

OH, BUT PLEASE BE SURE NOT TO TELL THE ADMIRAL THAT I'VE SEEN THROUGH HIS PLAN BECAUSE OTHERWISE, HE WILL SURELY ABANDON IT.

AH, GOOD TIMING, LU SU.

THEY SAY THAT YOU'VE GONE OVERBOARD.

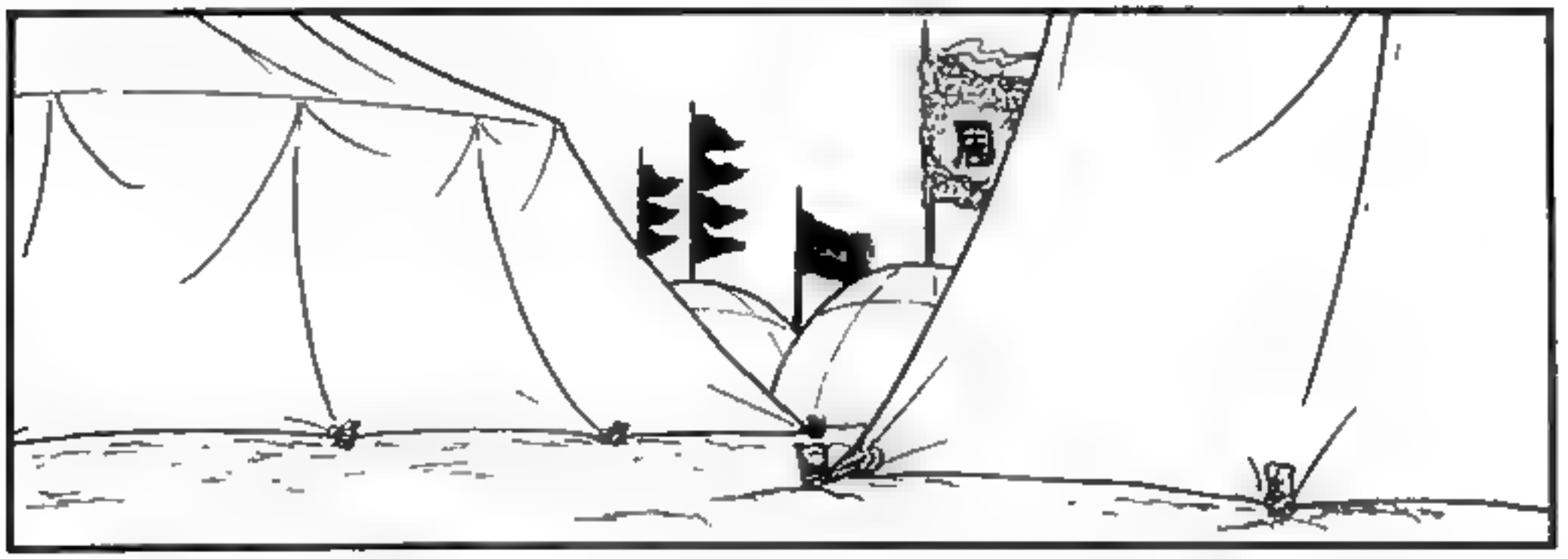
I WANTED TO ASK WHAT THE OTHER MEN ARE SAYING ABOUT TODAY'S EVENTS.

AND WHAT DID KONGMING SAY?

HE SAID THAT!?

H-HE WAS UPSET TO SEE YOU ACTED SO IMMATURELY.

HAHA, I DID IT! I'VE FINALLY MANAGED TO DECEIVE KONGMING! IF THIS PLAN OF MINE CAN TRICK EVEN HIM, THEN ITS SUCCESS IS PRACTICALLY GUARANTEED!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IT WAS REALLY TOO CRUEL OF ADMIRAL ZHOU.

ARE YOU ALRIGHT, GENERAL?

WE SHALL DO OUR BEST TO PERSUADE HIM INTO FORGIV-ING YOU.

REST EASY, GENERAL.
WE SHALL COME BY SHORTLY TO CHECK UP ON SIR'S RECOVERY.

AH, GOOD TO SEE YOU, KAN ZE.

HOW ARE YOU FEELING, HUANG GAI?

COULD YOU LEAVE US ALONE TO TALK PRIVATELY?

I WANT TO TELL YOU ALONE THE TRUTH.

?

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU TO COME VISIT ME.

I KNEW IT, THE BEATING WAS MERELY A RUSE, WASN'T IT?

NOT ONLY THAT, WHEN CONSIDERING YOU AND THE ADMIRAL'S CLOSE RELATIONSHIP, IT SEEMED VERY LIKELY THAT SOMETHING WAS UP.

ADMIRAL ZHOU YU ACTED ANGRIER THAN HE NORMALLY WOULD HAVE AND HIS PUNISHMENT WAS UNUSUALLY SEVERE.

HOW DID YOU GUESS?

AS I SUSPECTED...

SACRIFICING THIS FRAIL OLD BODY OF MINE IS NOTHING IF IT MEANS I CAN HELP SAVE WU. THAT IS WHY I VOLUNTEERED FOR THIS PLAN THOUGHT UP BY THE ADMIRAL.

AS EXPECTED OF THE STRATEGIST KAN ZE.

RIGHT AGAIN, OLD FRIEND. I WANT YOU TO PERSONALLY DELIVER THIS TO CAO CAO.

AND THE REASON WHY YOU'VE DECIDED TO TELL ME THE TRUTH IS TO GIVE ME AN IMPORTANT TASK, IS IT NOT?

SO YOU'VE ALREADY PREPARED THE LETTER, I SEE...

TAKE THIS TO HIM, PLEASE.

IT'S A LETTER OF SURREN-DER.

IF I CALL MYSELF A LOYAL SERVANT OF WU, IT IS ONLY EXPECTED THAT I BE READY TO GIVE UP MY LIFE FOR WU'S SAKE AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE. BESIDES, HOW CAN I LET YOUR SUFFERING GO TO VAIN?

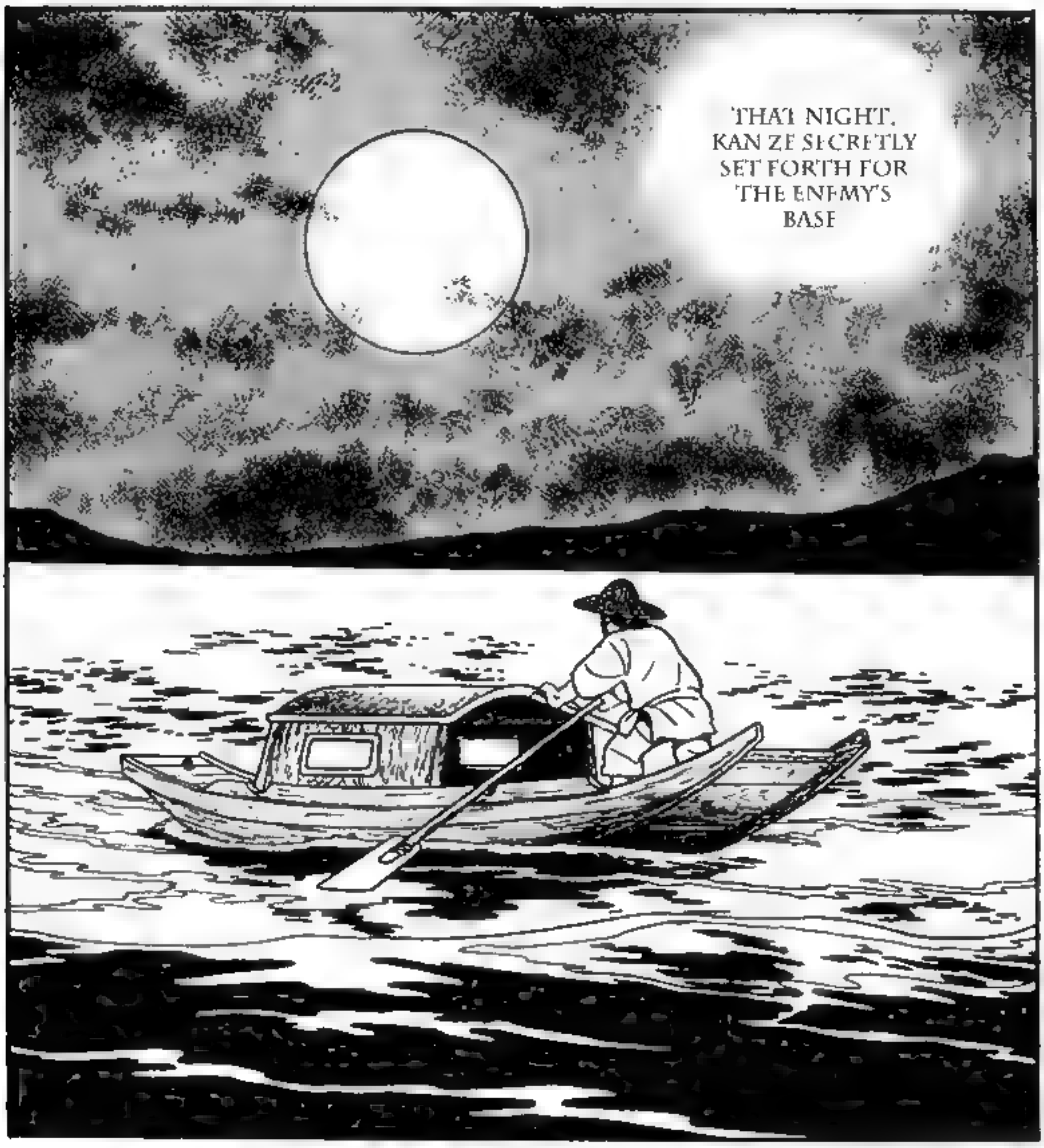
JUST BE AWARE THAT THIS MISSION WILL BE A DANGEROUS ONE.

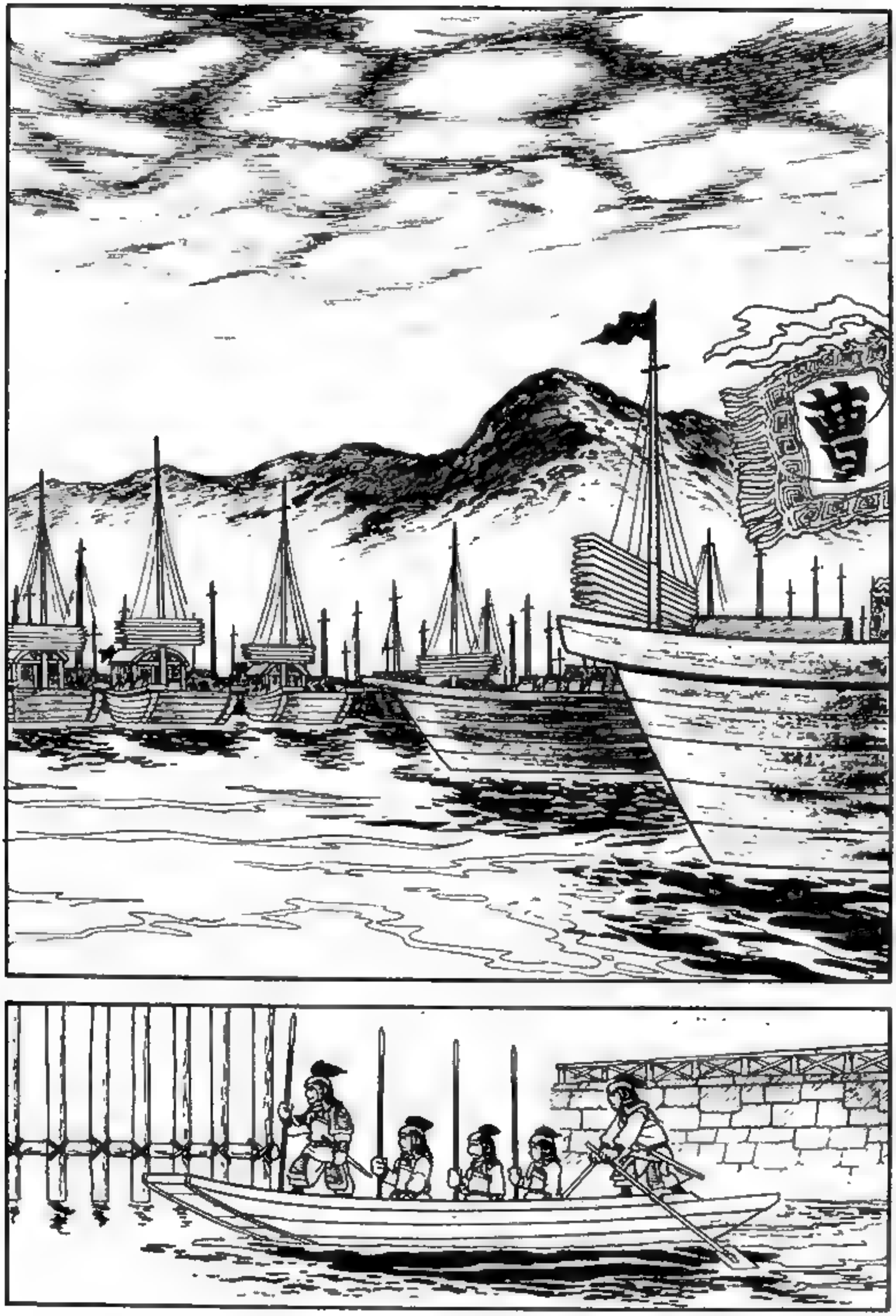
THE FATE OF WU LIES UPON THIS PLAN'S SUCCESS.

UNDERSTOOD. I SHALL ACCOMPLISH MY TASK NO MATTER WHAT.

FEAR NOT, I SHALL RETURN SAFELY.

I SHALL PRAY FOR YOUR SUCCESS.


THAT NIGHT, KAN ZE SECRETLY SET FORTH FOR THE ENEMY'S BASE



HM?

WHO'S THAT SUSPICIOUS MAN FISHING BY THE SHORE!?

'BOUT TIME YOU FELLOWS SHOWED UP.

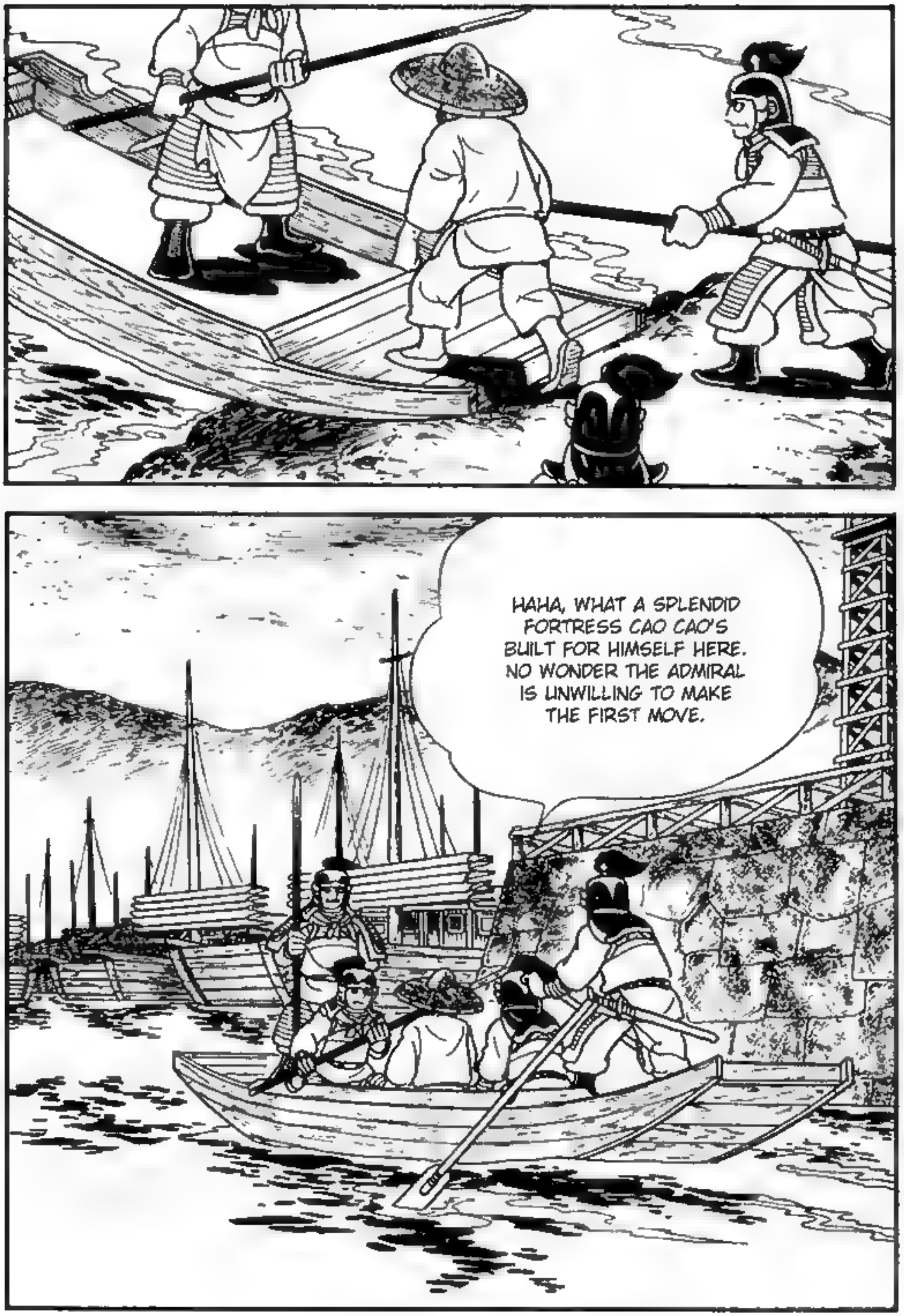
YOU THERE! IDENTIFY YOURSELF!

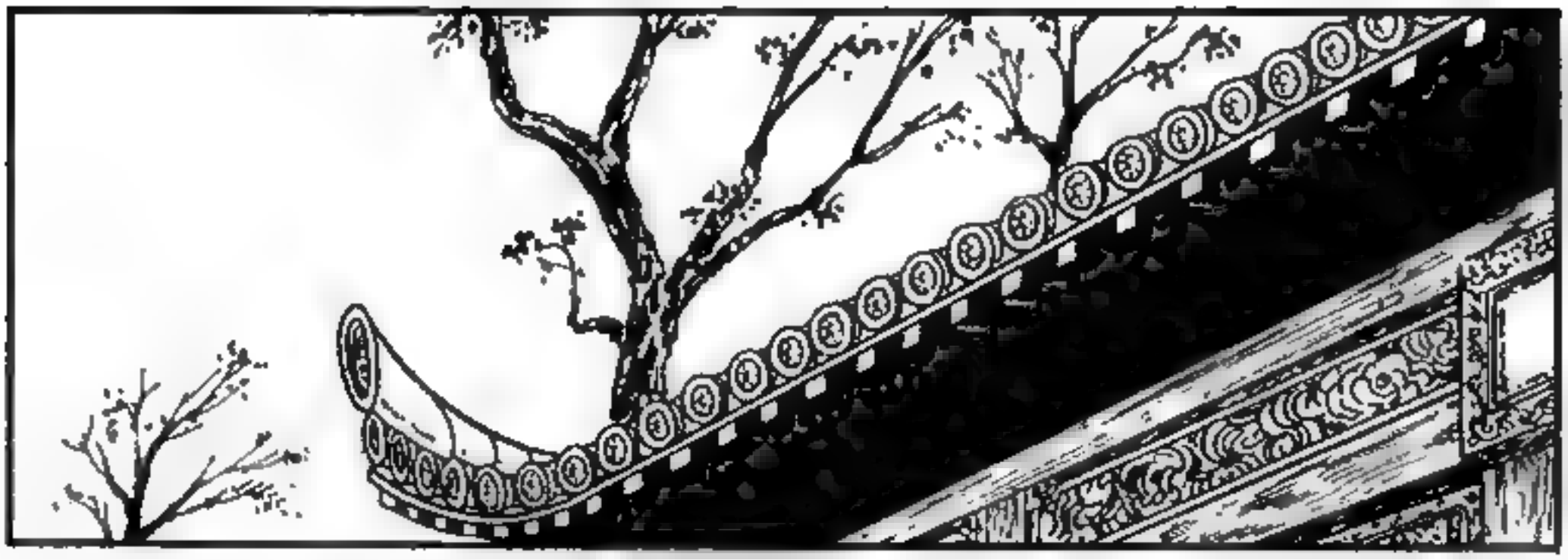
WHAT!?

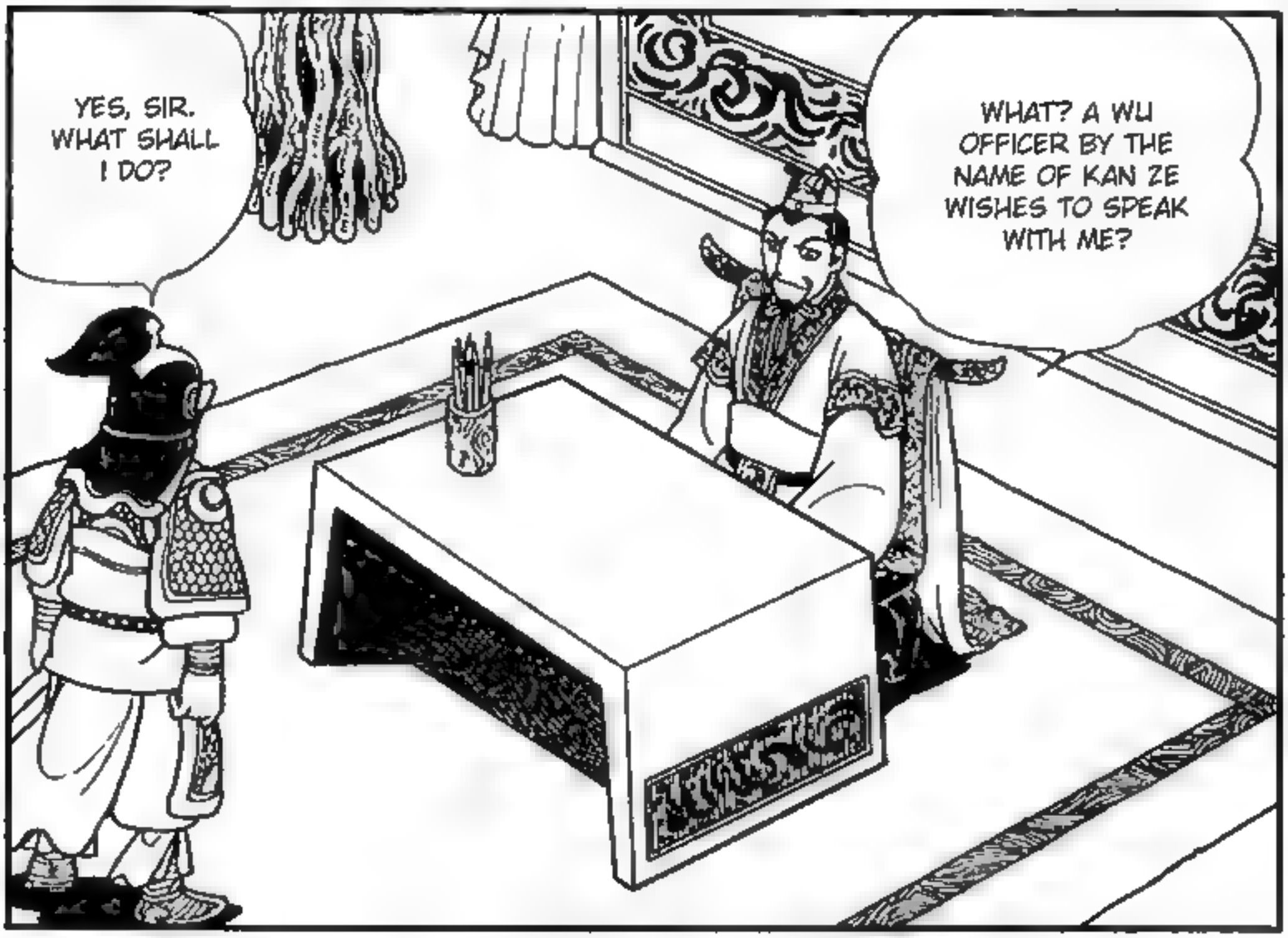
I AM KAN ZE, AN OFFICER OF WU. I HAVE COME HERE TO MEET WITH THE CHANCELLOR.

FINE, GET ON THE BOAT.

IF YOU WILL, PLEASE LEAD THE WAY. I'VE GROWN QUITE TIRED WAITING FOR YOU ALL MORNING.


HAHA, WHAT A SPLENDID FORTRESS CAO CAO'S BUILT FOR HIMSELF HERE. NO WONDER THE ADMIRAL IS UNWILLING TO MAKE THE FIRST MOVE.




YES, SIR. WHAT SHALL I DO?
WHAT? A WU OFFICER BY THE NAME OF KAN ZE WISHES TO SPEAK WITH ME?

BRING HIM IN HERE.

HM...

THE CHANCEL-
LOR HAS
AGREED TO
MEET WITH
YOU.

NOW THEN... FOR WHAT REASON HAVE YOU STUMBLED UPON MY ENCAMP-MENTS FOR?

HMM, JUDGING BY THAT DEFIANT LOOK OF YOURS, IT'S CLEAR THAT YOU'RE NO MERE FISHERMAN.

WELL? WHY WON'T YOU ANSWER?

WHAT!?

IT'S BECAUSE YOU DISAPPOINT ME.

I'VE HEARD THAT CAO CAO VALUES TALENT AND DESIRES MEN OF ABILITY, BUT PERHAPS THEY WERE MERE RUMOURS. OH HUANG GAI, HOW I PITY YOU FOR FALLING FOR A FALSE HERO.

EXACTLY! I'VE COME HERE FULLY KNOWING THAT I MAY BE KILLED AND YET YOU MAKE SUCH JOKES IN BAD TASTE ABOUT ME "STUM-BLING UPON" HERE? IS THIS THE WAY YOU TREAT MEN WILLING TO BRAVE DEATH?

AN OFFICER HAS DISGUISED HIMSELF AS A FISHERMAN AND CAME OVER TO THE ENEMY BASE. HOW IS IT OUT OF LINE FOR ME TO ASK WHY YOU CAME HERE?

AH, SO THAT'S WHAT IRKED YOU.

APOLOGY ACCEPTED. NOW THEN, ALLOW ME TO TELL YOU WHY I'VE COME TO YOU.

YOU HAVE MY SINCEREST APOLOGIES THEN.

IN WU, THERE IS A HIGH-RANKED GENERAL BY THE NAME OF HUANG GAI. HE IS ENTASKED WITH KEEPING CHECK OF THE WU ARMY'S WEAPONS AND FOOD SUPPLIES.

YET JUST A FEW DAYS AGO, HE WAS SEVERELY BEATEN 100 TIMES WITH WOODEN STICKS IN PUBLIC AFTER CRITICIZING COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF ZHOU YU'S LEADERSHIP.

EVERY MAN IN WU KNOWS HE IS AN ACCOMPLISHED VETERAN WHO HAS FAITHFULLY SERVED WU OVER THE YEARS.

FEELING THAT HE HAS BEEN DISGRACED AND BETRAYED BY WU, HE HAS DECIDED TO FIGHT UNDER THE CHANCELLOR INSTEAD AND HAVE REVENGE.

NOT ONLY THAT, THIS RECENT EVENT HAS CAUSED MANY OTHER WU OFFICERS TO DOUBT ZHOU YU'S JUDGEMENT.

WITH A BLOODIED BODY, HE NOW LIES IN BED SEETHING WITH RAGE.

WITH YOUR APPROVAL, HUANG GAI WILL COME OVER HERE ALONG WITH SHIPS FULLY LOADED WITH STOCKS OF FOOD AND WEAPONS.

I HAVE WITH ME HUANG GAI'S LETTER TO YOU.

DO YOU HAVE ANY PROOF OF HIS WORDS?

GIVE IT HERE.

HAHAHA.

YOU REALLY THOUGHT YOU COULD DECEIVE ME WITH THIS CHILDISH TRICK?

OFF WITH HIS HEAD!

AHAHAHA!

HA HA HA HA

HA HA HA

BUT I NEVER WOULD'VE THOUGHT THAT CAO CAO OF WEI WOULD BE THIS BIG OF A COWARD!

IF IT'S MY HEAD YOU WANT, I SHALL GIVE IT TO YOU WILLINGLY. YOU THINK I WOULD'VE COME ALL THE WAY HERE IF I WERE AFRAID TO LOSE MY LIFE?

SILENCE! I FAIL TO SEE HOW TAKING THE HEAD OF A PATHETIC AND TREACHEROUS LIAR IS COWARDLY!

EVER SINCE I WAS A BOY, I'VE PORED THROUGH ALL THE CLASSIC MILITARY TREATISES SUCH AS WU QI'S WUZI AND SUN TZU'S ART OF WAR! YOU MAY FOOL OTHERS, BUT I SHAN'T FALL FOR YOUR SHAMELESS LIES!

AHAHAHA!

HAHAHAHA!

I HAD NO IDEA SUCH A FOOL ACTUALLY EXISTED!

YOU'VE STUDIED ALL THE MILITARY CLASSICS AND YET YOU CAN'T EVEN TELL APART TRUTH FROM LIES!?

YOU ARE EVEN FUNNIER THAN I THOUGHT.

BEFORE I EXECUTE YOU, LET ME TELL YOU EXACTLY WHY THIS LETTER IS FAKE.

ENOUGH EXCUSES!

IF HUANG GAI WERE TRULY SINCERE ABOUT SURRENDERING, THEN HE WOULD'VE INCLUDED A DATE ON WHEN HE WOULD COME OVER ALONG WITH HIS SHIPS. BUT THERE'S NOT A SINGLE MENTION OF A DATE IN THIS LETTER!

WHAT!?

NO WONDER YOU CAN'T GET THE BETTER OF ZHOU YU.

HAHAHA, YOU CAN'T SEEM TO STOP SPEWING RIDICULOUS NONSENSE, CAN YOU? IT SEEMS READING ALL THOSE BOOKS WERE A WASTE ON YOU, CONSIDERING YOUR INTELLECT.

AM I WRONG!? YOU'VE DELUDED YOURSELF INTO THINKING THAT YOUR BOOKS HAVE TAUGHT YOU EVERYTHING THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT THE WORLD. IT IS NOT SURPRISING TO SEE WHY A BOOKWORM LIKE YOU CAN'T EVER BEAT ZHOU YU NOR UNDERSTAND WHY THERE IS NO MENTION OF A DATE!

HMPH, THIS ONE SURE KNOWS HOW TO ACT ON HIS FEET.

THAT IS SIMPLE.

FINE, TELL ME WHY HUANG GAI CHOSE NOT TO NAME A DATE.

IF HE WERE TO NAME A SPECIFIC DATE AND SOMETHING WERE TO HAPPEN ON THAT DAY BY RANDOM CHANCE TO FOIL HIS PLAN, WOULD HE NOT LOSE YOUR TRUST?

BETRAYING ONE'S LORD IS A SERIOUS MATTER AND IT IS ONLY NATURAL THAT HUANG GAI WILL TAKE UTMOST CAUTION IN HIS PLAN.

IF HUANG GAI WERE TO LOSE YOUR TRUST, THEN HE WOULD RISK HAVING BOTH WU AND WEI AS HIS ENEMIES. A GENERAL AS WISE AND PRUDENT AS HE WOULD NEVER DO SUCH A FOOLISH THING.

IF YOU STILL DOUBT HIS WORDS, THEN I'M AFRAID YOUR IGNORANCE IS INCURABLE.

THUS, THE LACK OF A DATE ON THAT LETTER IS PROOF THAT HIS INTENTIONS ARE SINCERE.

IT SEEMS I WAS A LITTLE RASH.

HMM... YOU MAKE A GOOD POINT...

I WISH TO TALK MORE WITH YOU BEFORE I MAKE MY DECISION, HOWEVER.

WHISPER

?

SIR.

WAIT HERE FOR A MOMENT.

HERE IS CAI HE'S LETTER.

IS THAT SO?

CAI HE'S REPORT IS PERFECTLY IN LINE WITH WHAT KAN ZE SAID.

MY APOLOGIES FOR THE WAIT.

HUANG GAI SHALL BE DELIGHTED TO HEAR IT.

I HAVE DECIDED THAT YOU AND HUANG GAI'S WORDS ARE SINCERE. YOU MAY RETURN TO TELL HUANG GAI THAT I SHALL GLADLY TAKE IN YOU AND HIM AS MY SUBORDINATES.

IF YOU DON'T MIND CHANCELLOR, PLEASE SEND SOMEONE ELSE TO TELL HUANG GAI FOR I WOULD LIKE TO STAY HERE.

WAIT, HE MIGHT STILL BE TESTING MY SINCERITY.

AS I CROSSED THE RIVER, I PROMISED MYSELF I WOULD LEAVE WU FOR GOOD.

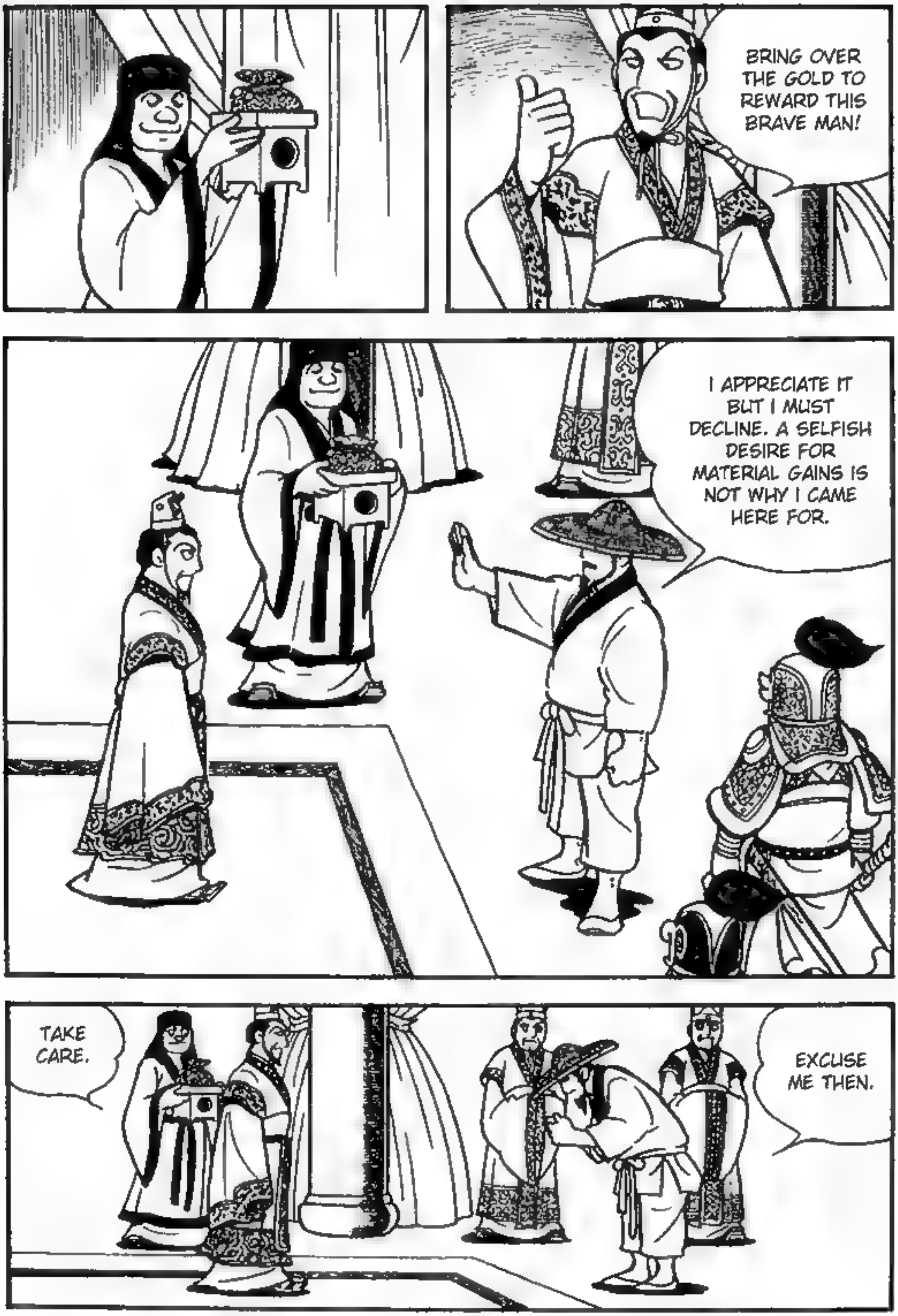
AND WHY IS THAT?

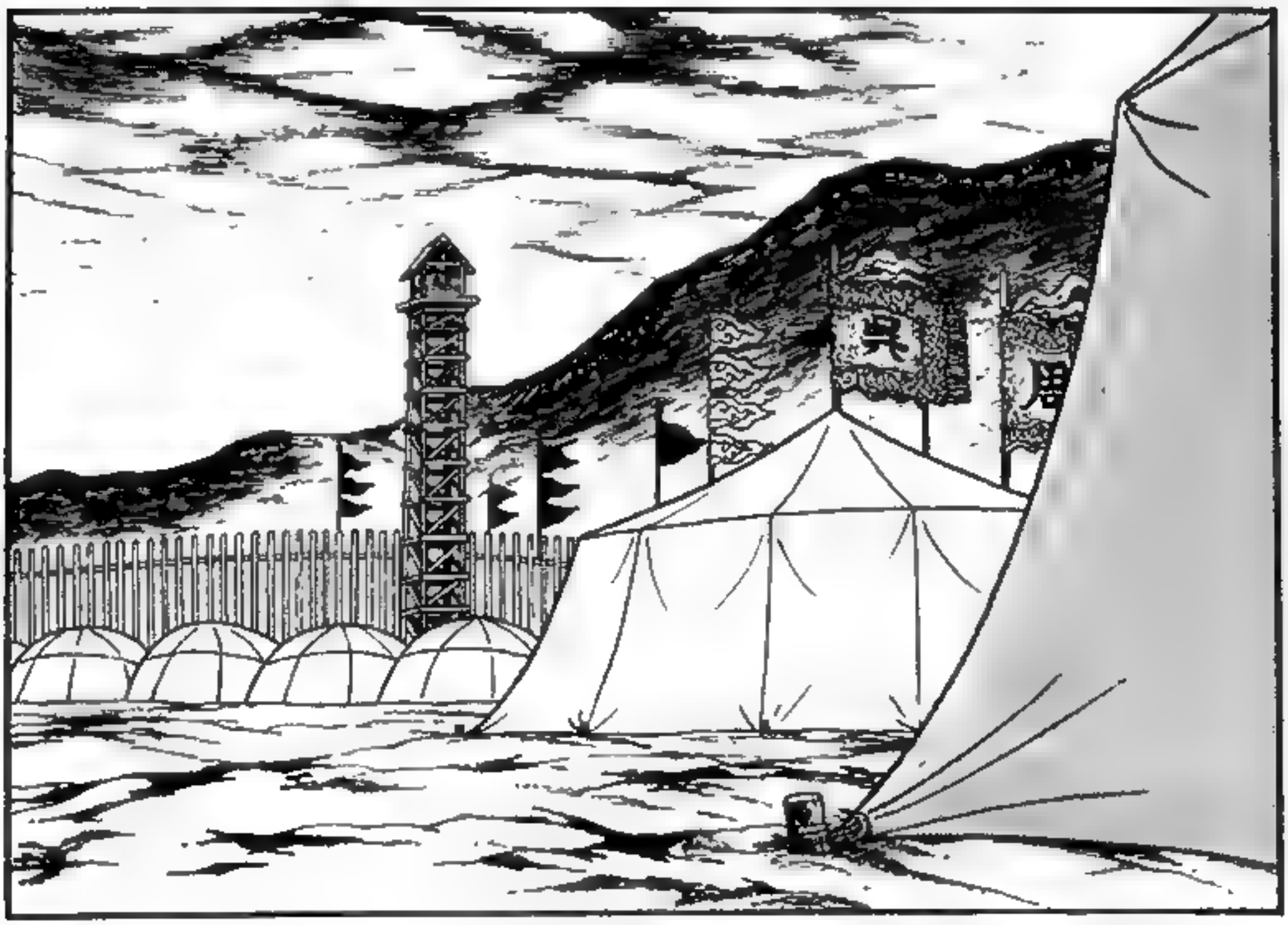
BUT I'M AFRAID SENDING SOMEONE OTHER THAN YOU WOULD AROUSE OUR ENEMIES' SUSPICIONS.

HM...

I HAVE NO CHOICE THEN...

HAVING YOU GO BACK WOULD BE THE SAFEST OPTION.


BRING OVER THE GOLD TO REWARD THIS BRAVE MAN!
I APPRECIATE IT BUT I MUST DECLINE. A SELFISH DESIRE FOR MATERIAL GAINS IS NOT WHY I CAME HERE FOR.
TAKE CARE.
EXCUSE ME THEN.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BUT WHY DO YOU THINK CAO CAO SUDDENLY DECIDED TO TRUST YOU? YOU DON'T THINK HE'S PLANNING A TRAP FOR US, DO YOU?

YES, DESPITE A FEW BUMPS ALONG THE WAY.
SO EVERY-THING WENT WELL?

I'M SURE THAT LETTER MUST'VE BEEN FROM THEIR SPIES, CAI HE AND CAI ZHONG.

NO, I DON'T THINK THAT'S THE CASE. HE CHANGED HIS MIND AFTER RECEIVING A CERTAIN LETTER.

THEY'RE PLACED UNDER GAN NING'S CHARGE.

BY THE WAY, WHERE ARE CAI ZHONG AND CAI HE RIGHT NOW?

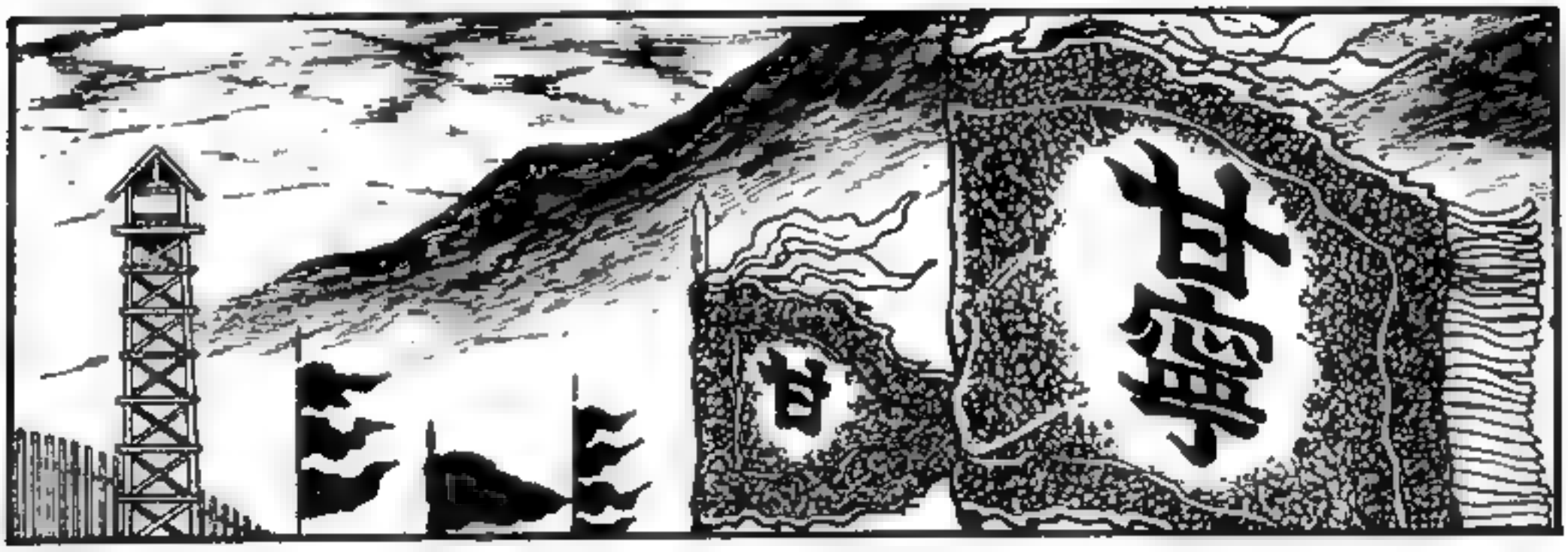
I SEE...

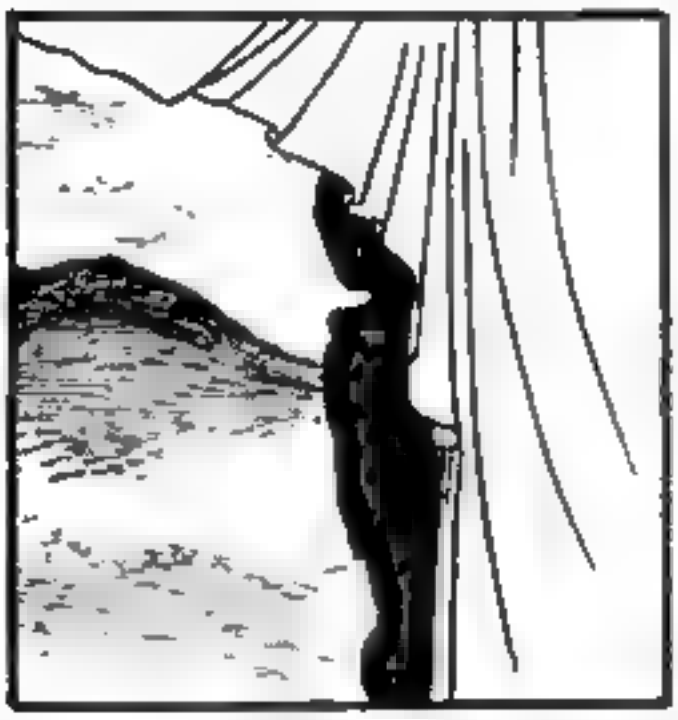
WHISPER WHISPER

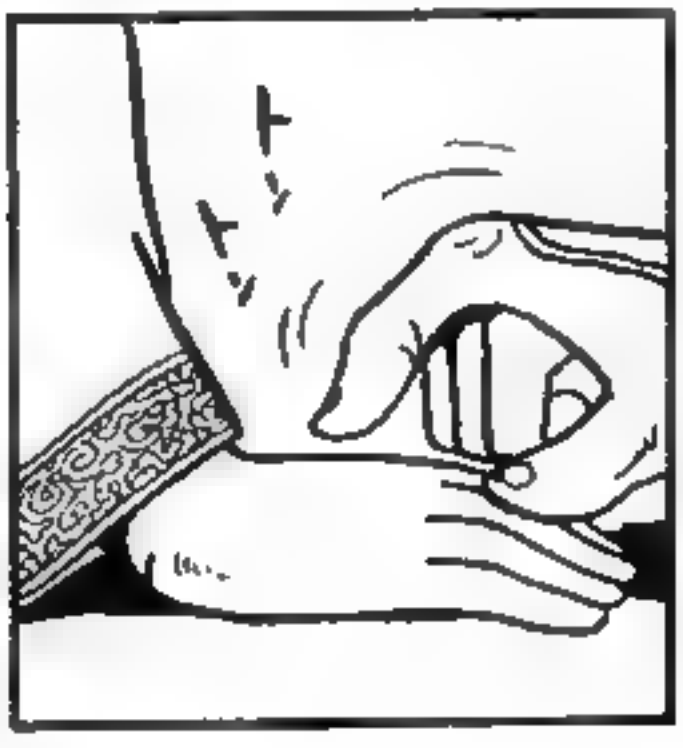
LEND ME YOUR EAR.

UNDER-STOOD.

*FLAG (甘寧) READS GAN NING







HUMILIATING HUANG GAI IN PUBLIC LIKE THAT WAS QUITE TACTLESS OF HIM.

HIS ACTIONS ARE ONLY STIRRING UP CONFLICTS WITHIN.

I ADMIT THAT ZHOU YU'S A TALENTED MAN BUT EVEN SO, THAT DOESN'T JUSTIFY HIM TO LOOK DOWN ON OTHERS.

LET'S CONTINUE THIS TALK DEEPER BACK IN THE TENT.

SHH! YOUR VOICE IS TOO LOUD. WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF SOMEONE WERE TO OVERHEAR YOU?

.....

FOR THE NEXT FEW NIGHTS, GAN NING AND KAN ZE CONTINUED THEIR "PRIVATE" CONVERSATION

HM?

HOW MUCH DID YOU OVERHEAR!?

WHO'S THAT OUTSIDE!?

GAN NING, STOP!

NGH...

W-WE DIDN'T...

BUT...

LET US AT LEAST END OUR LIVES HONOUR-ABLY.

FACE IT, WE'RE CAUGHT RED-HANDED.

?

PLEASE CALM DOWN, SIRS. THERE'S NO CAUSE FOR WORRIES.

WE ARE ALREADY WELL AWARE OF HOW YOU SIRS ARE RESENTFUL OF ZHOU YU AND ARE WANTING TO BECOME CAO CAO'S SUBORDINATES INSTEAD.

WHAT!

THE TRUTH IS, WE'RE ACTUALLY CAO CAO'S SPIES. WHAT WE TOLD ADMIRAL ZHOU YU ABOUT AVENGING OUR UNCLE'S DEATH WAS ONLY A LIE.

WHO WOULD EVER JOKE ABOUT SUCH A SERIOUS MATTER?

YOU'RE NOT LYING, ARE YOU?

FEAR NOT, WE ARE ON YOUR SIDE.

AS EXPECTED OF THE CUNNING CAO CAO. IT SEEMS ONLY TOO CLEAR THAT WU SHALL BE THE LOSER IN THIS WAR.

I HADN'T THE FAINTEST IDEA THAT YOU WERE SPIES ALL ALONG...

WHEW, THAT'S A RELIEF.

YES, IT SHALL.

IT'LL BE EASIER TO TAKE REVENGE ON ZHOU YU.

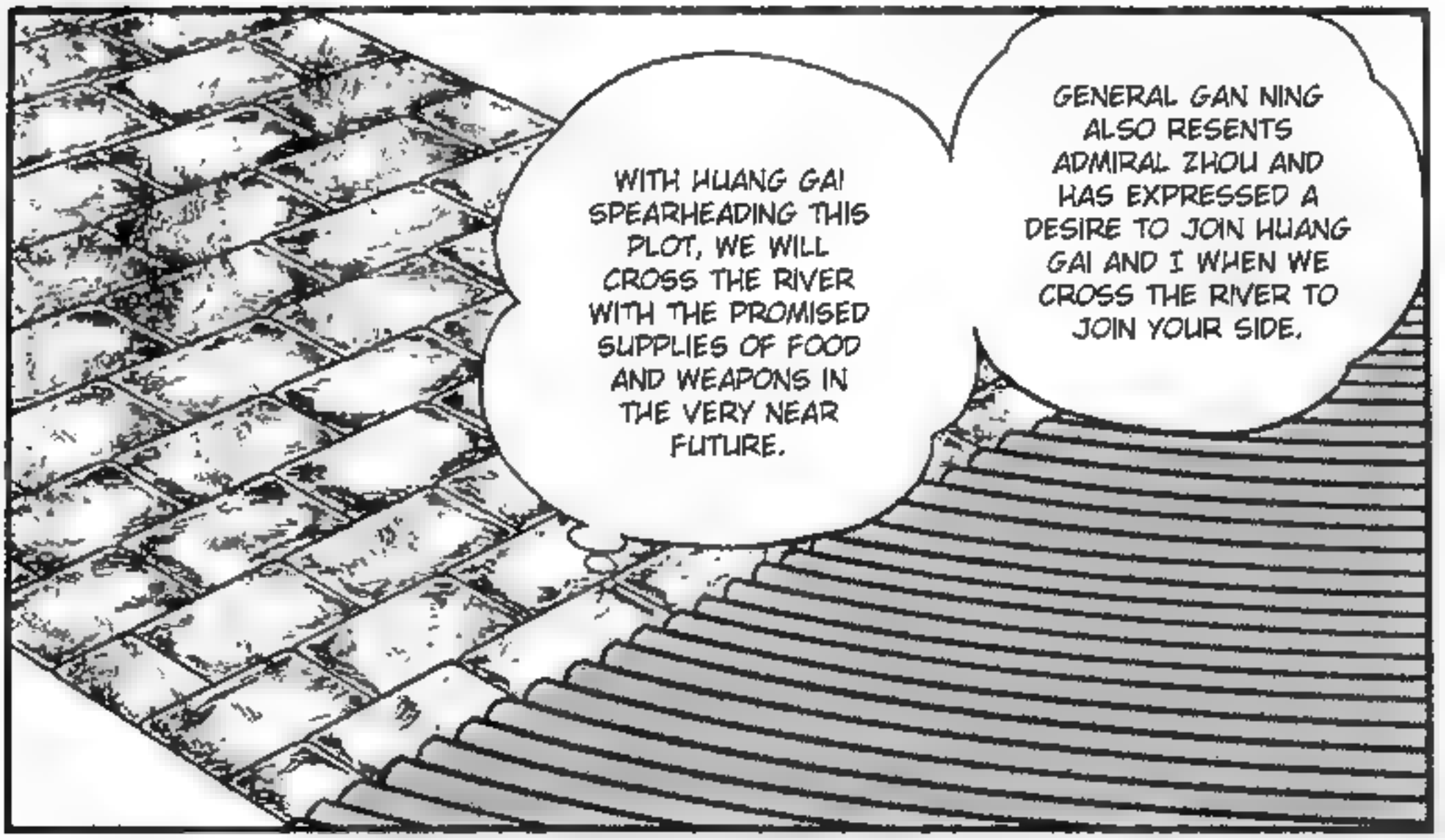
BUT IN ANY CASE, WITH YOU AS OUR ALLIES,

NEITHER CAI HE NOR CAI ZHONG HAD THE SLIGHTEST INKLING THAT THIS WAS ALL AN ACT.

THEN LET US GO INSIDE AND START PLANNING TOGETHER.

AS DECEIVERS THEMSELVES, THEY WOULD NEVER HAVE EXPECTED THAT THEY WERE THE ONES BEING DECEIVED
AS MILITARY TREATISES OFTEN PREACH, DECEPTION IS THE LANGUAGE OF WAR.

THE YOUNG PHOENIX RISES


WITH HUANG GAI SPEARHEADING THIS PLOT, WE WILL CROSS THE RIVER WITH THE PROMISED SUPPLIES OF FOOD AND WEAPONS IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE.
GENERAL GAN NING ALSO RESENTS ADMIRAL ZHOU AND HAS EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO JOIN HUANG GAI AND I WHEN WE CROSS THE RIVER TO JOIN YOUR SIDE.

THE LETTERS I'VE RECEIVED FROM CAI HE AND CAI ZHONG SAY THE SAME THING. HOWEVER, I GET THE FEELING THAT THINGS ARE GOING ALONG *TOO* SMOOTHLY.

GENTLEMEN, DO YOU BELIEVE THESE LETTERS ARE TRUSTWORTHY?

STILL, IF THEY WERE LYING AND WE WERE TO TRUST THEM, WE WOULD LITERALLY BE OPENING UP OUR FORTRESS TO ALLOW ENEMY SHIPS INSIDE.

IT IS DIFFICULT TO SAY BUT SEEING HOW OUR SPIES CAI ZHONG AND CAI HE SAY THE SAME THING, I DO THINK IT IS *MORE* LIKELY TO BE TRUE THAN FALSE.

WHAT IS IT, JIANG GAN?

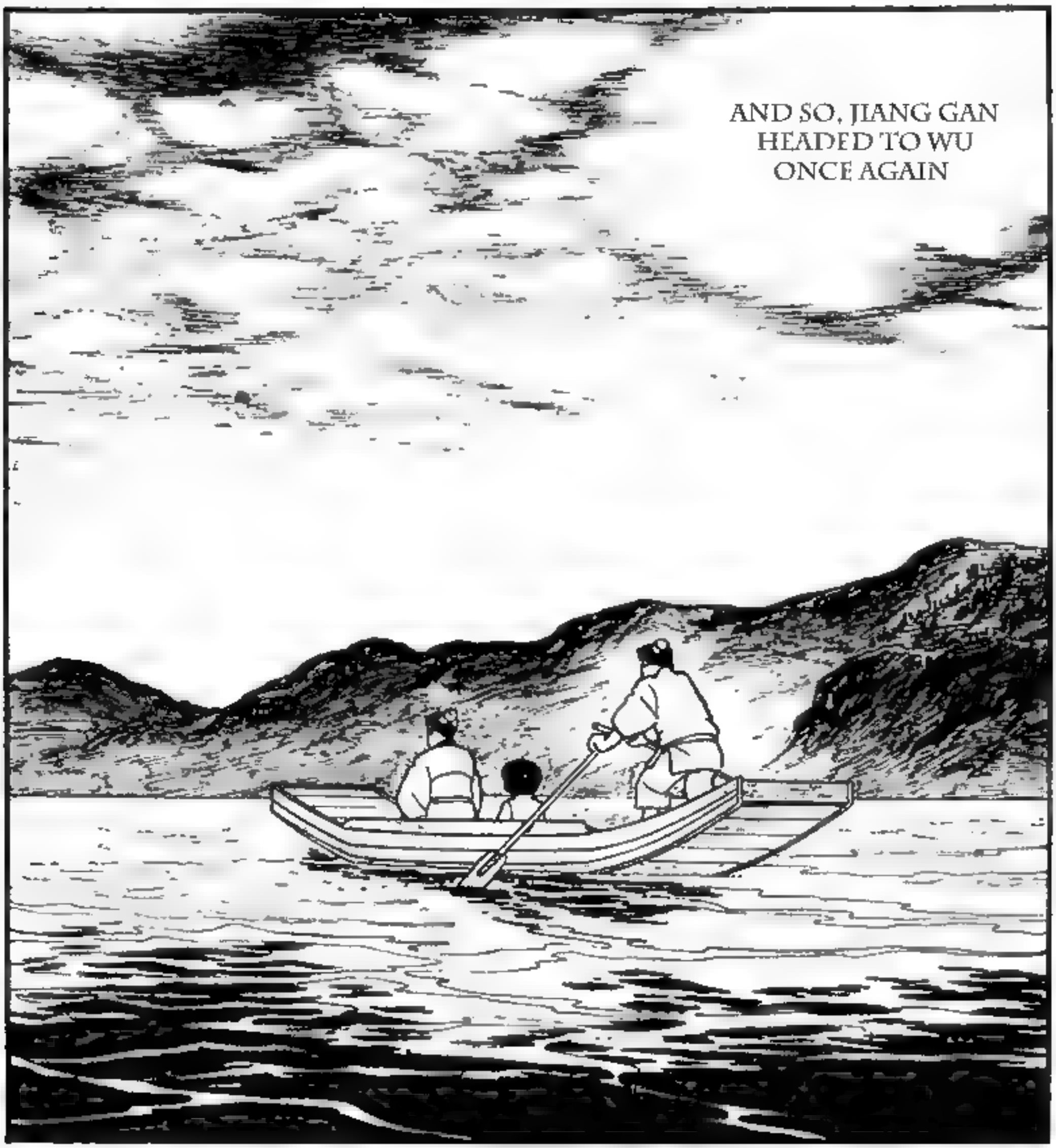
IF I MAY INTERJECT, SIR...

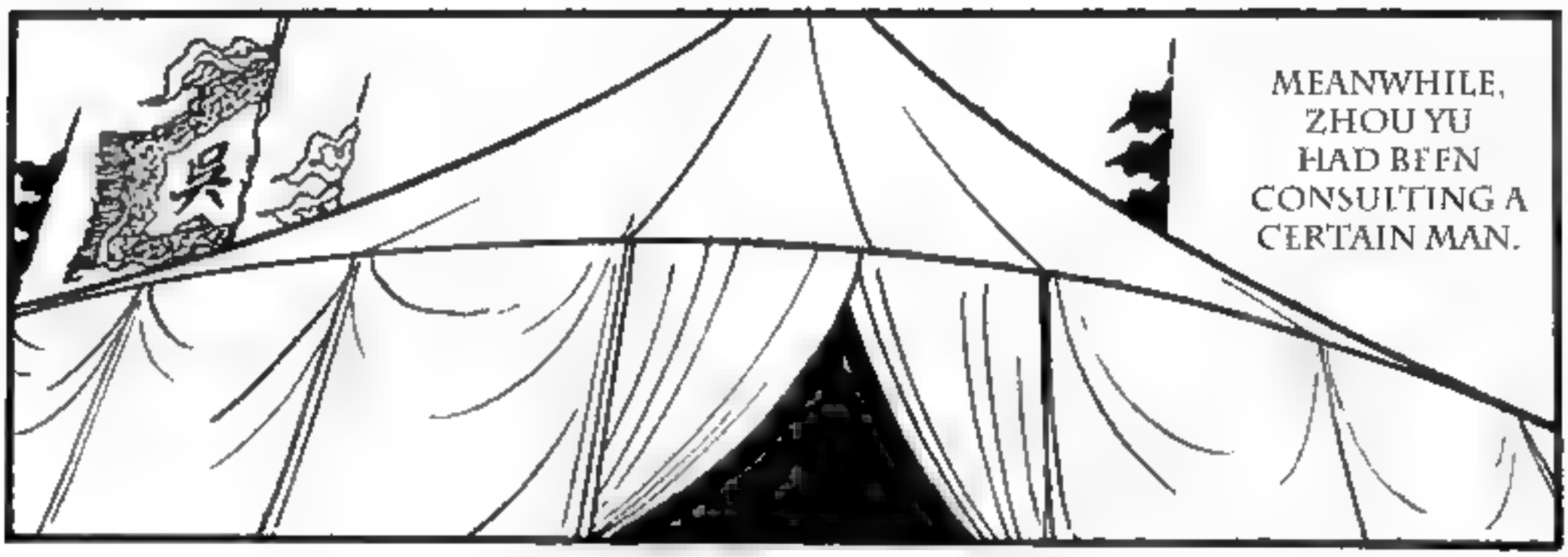
AND HOW WILL YOU DO THAT?
I FAILED MY MISSION TO PERSUADE ZHOU YU AND CAME BACK EMPTY-HANDED LAST TIME. PLEASE ALLOW ME ANOTHER CHANCE TO REDEEM MYSELF.

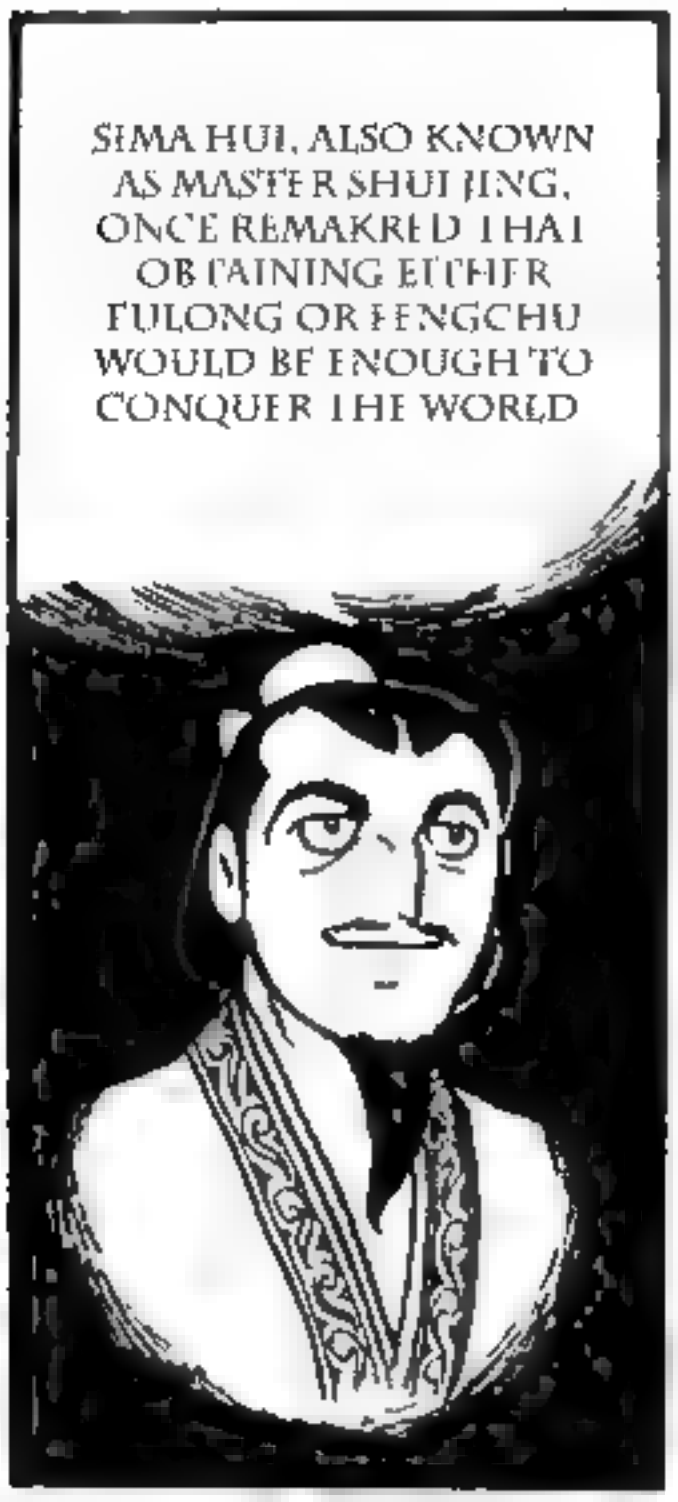
I SHALL GO TO WU ONCE MORE AND PERSONALLY DETERMINE WHETHER THE CONTENTS OF THOSE TWO LETTERS ARE TRUE OR NOT.

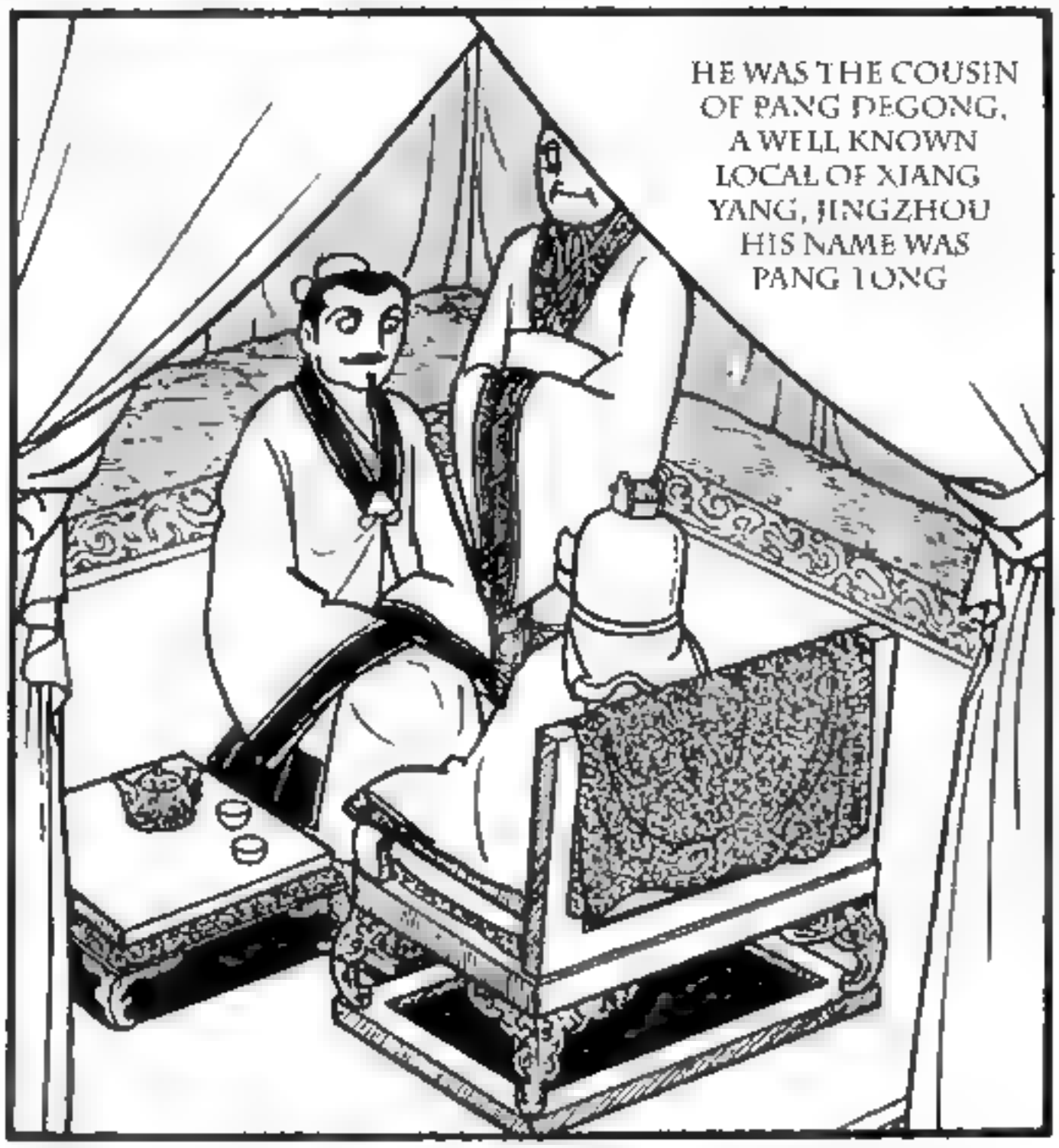
THEN LEAVE AT ONCE.

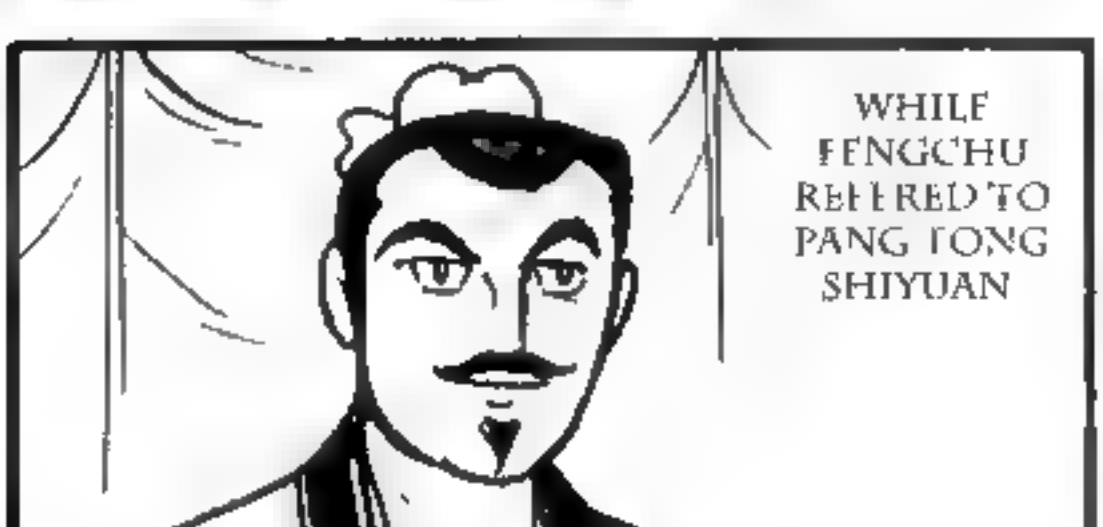
YES, THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO DETERMINE THE TRUTH.

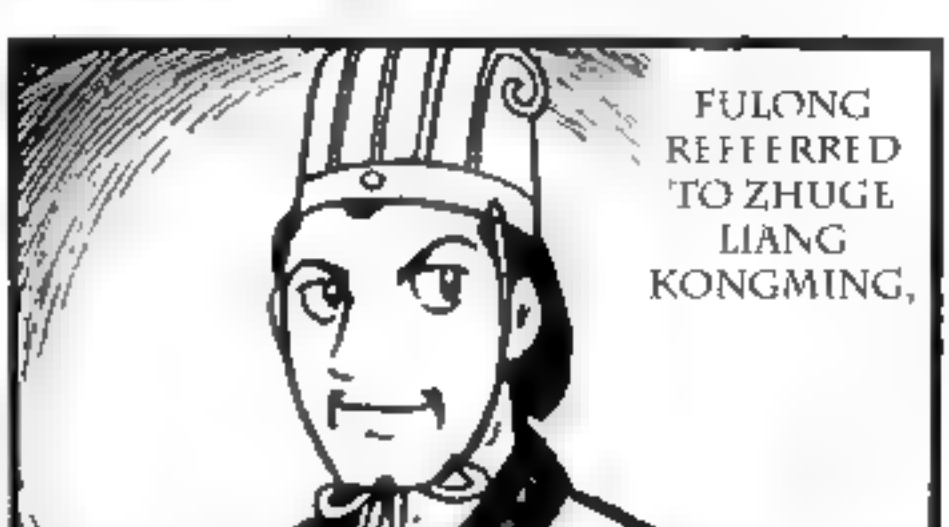

AND SO, JIANG GAN HEADED TO WU ONCE AGAIN




SIMA HUI, ALSO KNOWN AS MASTER SHUI JING, ONCE REMAKRED THAT OBTAINING EITHER FULONG OR FENGCHU WOULD BE ENOUGH TO CONQUER THE WORLD







*THE NICKNAME FENGCHU LITERALLY MEANS "YOUNG PHOENIX," HENCE THE CHAPTER'S TITLE

YES, EVER SINCE XIANGYANG AND THE REST OF JINGZHOU WERE CONQUERED BY CAO CAO, I'VE BEEN LIVING IN THE MOUNTAINS OF WU.

I HEAR YOU'VE BEEN LIVING IN THE MOUNTAINS NEAR THIS AREA, MASTER PANG TONG.

SEEING AS HOW CAO CAO HAS TRAMPLED MY HOMELAND JINGZHOU, I SHALL GLADLY HELP.

DO YOU HAVE ANY DESIRE TO LEND YOUR ASSISTANCE TO WU? ALTHOUGH YOU ARE A FREE OFFICER, WE WOULD TREAT YOU WITH THE UTMOST RESPECT.

I WOULD THINK FIRE IS THE ONLY WAY TO GO.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IS THE BEST WAY FOR OUR GREATLY OUTNUMBERED FORCES TO BEAT CAO CAO'S MILLION-MAN ARMY?

THAT BEING SAID, BURNING DOWN A FEW OF THEIR SHIPS IS A FUTILE EFFORT. WE MUST BURN DOWN THEIR ENTIRE FLEET OR NOTHING.

YOU THOUGHT SO AS WELL?

IT'S POSSIBLE AS LONG AS THE SHIPS ARE ALL GATHERED IN ONE PLACE AND TIED TOGETHER WITH IRON CHAINS.

BUT IS SUCH A THING EVEN POSSIBLE?

YES, THAT IS WHAT IS KNOWN AS THE CHAIN STRATEGY.

WHAT!?

LEAVE THAT TO ME.

BUT CAO CAO IS WELL VERSED IN THE WAYS OF WAR. HOW COULD WE MAKE HIM FALL FOR SUCH A TRICK?

THE CHAIN STRATEGY ...!?

HM...

THEN I SHALL TAKE MY LEAVE FOR TODAY...

JIANG GAN?
ADMIRAL, YOUR OLD FRIEND JIANG GAN HAS COME TO VISIT AGAIN.

YES, SIR.
LET HIM IN.

周
THE ADMIRAL HAS AGREED TO MEET WITH YOU, SIR.

HMPH, HERE TO POSE AS A TRUSTWORTHY FRIEND ONLY TO END UP STABBING MY BACK AGAIN?

THANK YOU FOR THE GENEROUS BANQUET LAST TIME, FRIEND.

WHATEVER DO YOU MEAN?

SILENCE!

I ONLY CAME HERE TO TELL YOU SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT AS A WAY TO REPAY YOUR KINDNESS FROM THE NIGHT BEFORE.

HOW SHAMELESS COULD YOU BE? EVEN THOUGH I TREATED YOU WITH THE UTMOST KINDNESS FOR OLD TIME'S SAKE, YOU REPAID ME BY STEALING AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT AND CONFIDENTIAL LETTER FROM MY TENT AFTER I FELL ASLEEP!

W-WHA!? WHAT'S THE CAUSE FOR THESE SUDDEN ACCUSATIONS?

I ALREADY KNOW WHAT YOU'RE PLANNING. YOU'RE GOING TO TRY TO GET ME TO SURRENDER AND JOIN CAO CAO, AREN'T YOU!?

ENOUGH WITH THESE BAD JOKES, I WOULD NEVER DO SUCH A THING.

DON'T DENY IT, I KNOW IT WAS YOU.

I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE PLANNING. YOU'RE HERE TO GET ME TO TURN ON MY NEWEST ALLIES, CAI ZHONG AND CAI HE, AREN'T YOU!?

...

SHUT YOUR MOUTH! THANKS TO YOU, MY FRIEND CAI MAO BEHIIND ENEMY LINES HAS BEEN EXECUTED AND MY PLAN HAS BEEN FOILED!

T-THIS IS ALL A MIS-UNDER-STANDING!

GUARDS! ARREST THIS MAN!

I WOULD HAVE YOU KILLED RIGHT HERE AND NOW IF IT WEREN'T FOR OUR OLD FRIENDSHIP. ONCE I FINISH TAKING CARE OF THAT HEINOUS CAO CAO IN 2-3 DAYS, I'LL TURN MY ATTENTION INTO SEEING HOW I CAN BEST PUNISH YOU.

GUARDS, LOCK THIS MAN UP IN A HUT ON THE MOUNTAINS.

WAIT A MINUTE... IF I KEEP HIM IN OUR CAMPS, THEN HE MIGHT OVERHEAR OUR BATTLE PLANS.

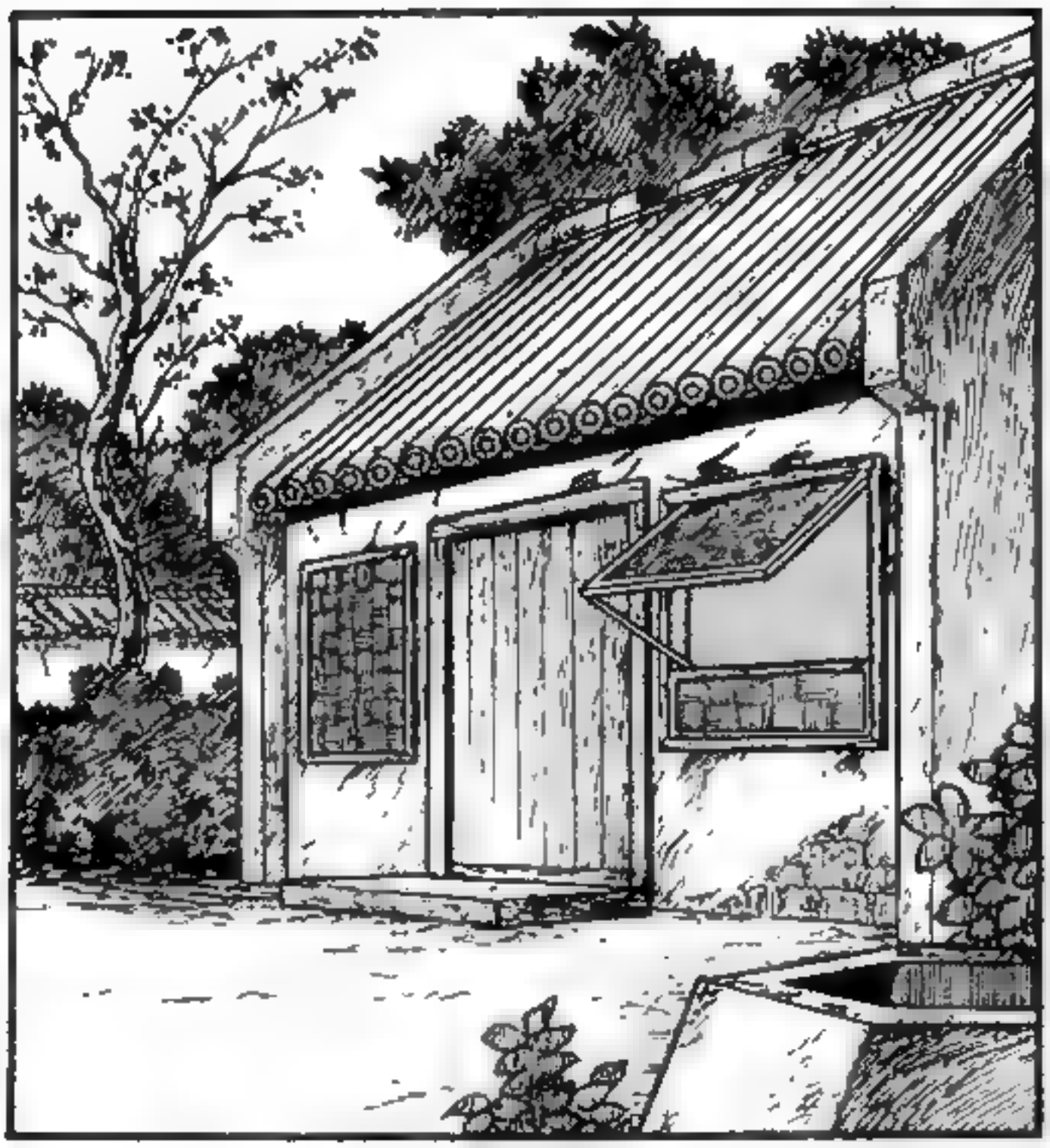
Z-ZHOU YU!

FOLLOW ALONG QUIETLY!

.....

SIGH

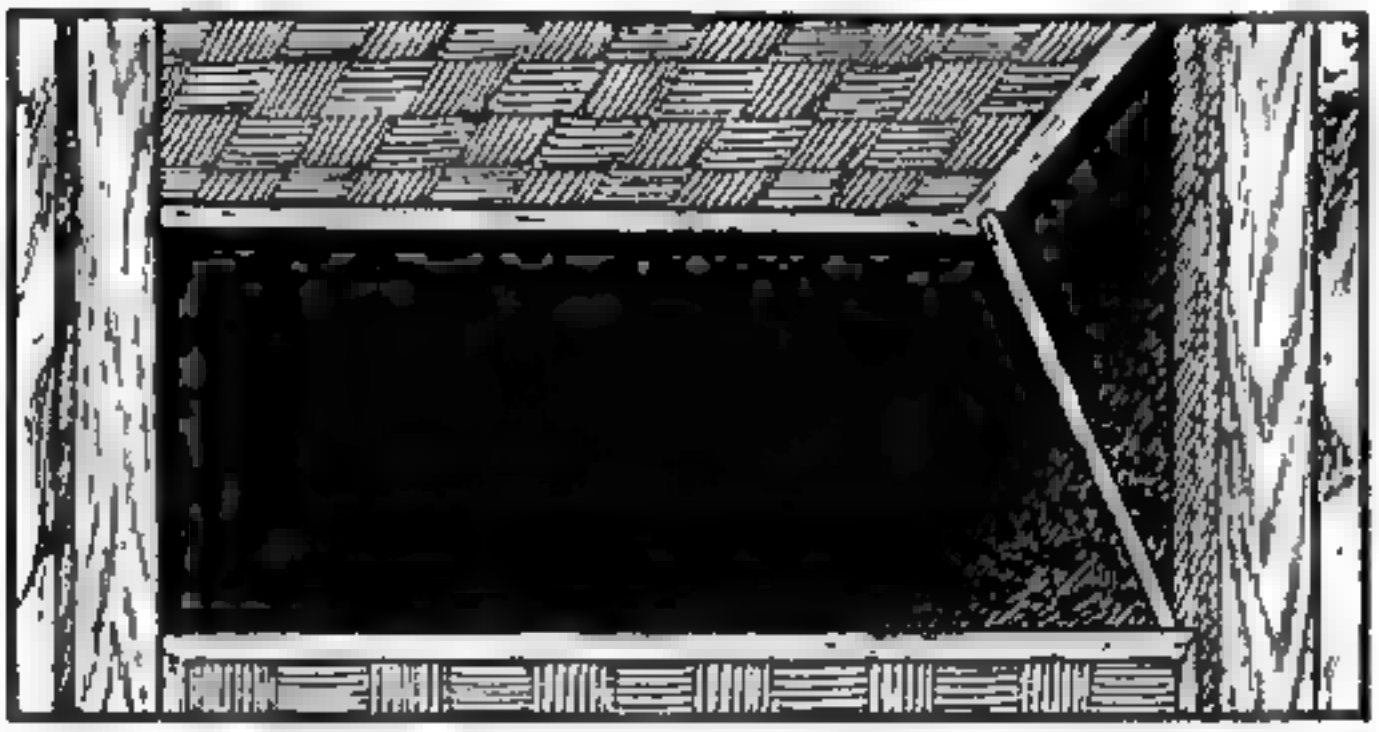
WHAT DO I DO... HOW CAN I SUCCEED IN MY MISSION IF I'M LOCKED UP HERE IN THIS HUT?



I CAN'T EVEN RETURN BACK TO THE CHANCELLOR LIKE THIS...

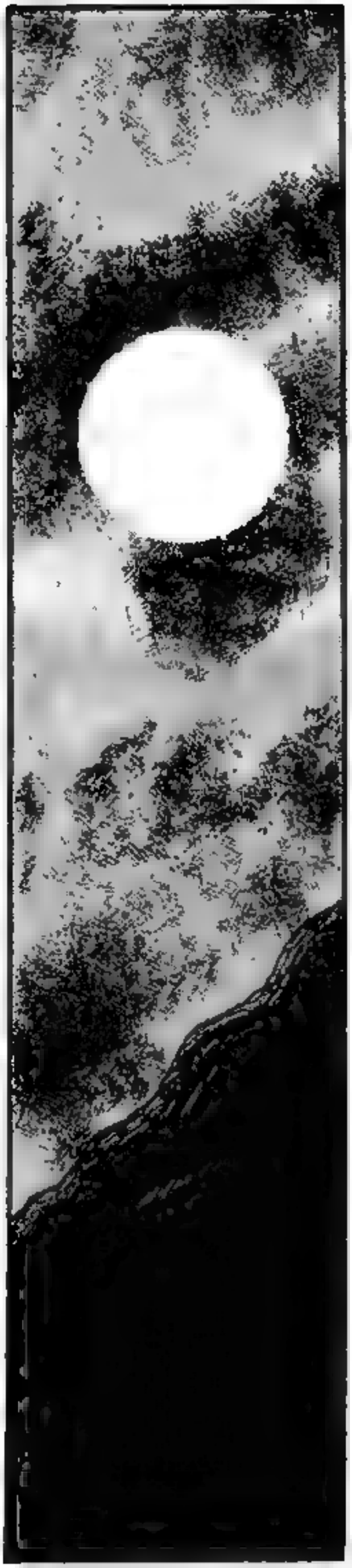
THAT'S ODD.

HM?



WHERE ARE THE GUARDS?

AH!
ZZZZZ...



NOW'S MY CHANCE!

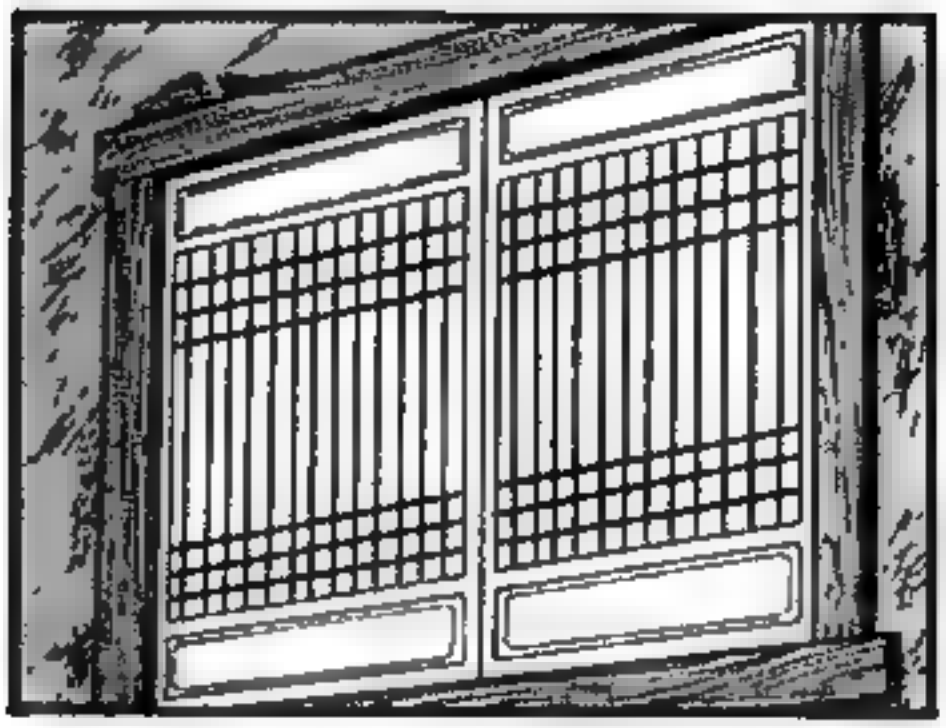
ZZZ...

PANT PANT PANT

AH!

CURSES. I MAY HAVE MANAGED TO ESCAPE BUT I HAVE NO IDEA WHERE I AM.

PERHAPS I CAN ASK THE OWNER OF THAT HOME FOR DIRECTIONS.



THANK HEAVENS! WHOEVER LIVES HERE IS STILL AWAKE.

WHO'S OUT THERE?

WAIT A MOMENT... AREN'T YOU ADMIRAL ZHOU YU'S FRIEND, JIANG GAN?

AH, THAT MUST BE QUITE TROUBLING.
EXCUSE ME FOR INTRUDING BUT I'VE LOST MY WAY AND WOULD LIKE TO ASK FOR DIRECTIONS...

AH!

YES, I BELIEVE I SAW YOU ON THAT NIGHT OF THE BANQUET.

Y-YOU KNOW WHO I AM...?

I AM PANG TONG SHIYUAN.

W-WHOM MIGHT YOU BE, SIR?

YES BUT WHY DON'T WE CONTINUE OUR TALK INSIDE?

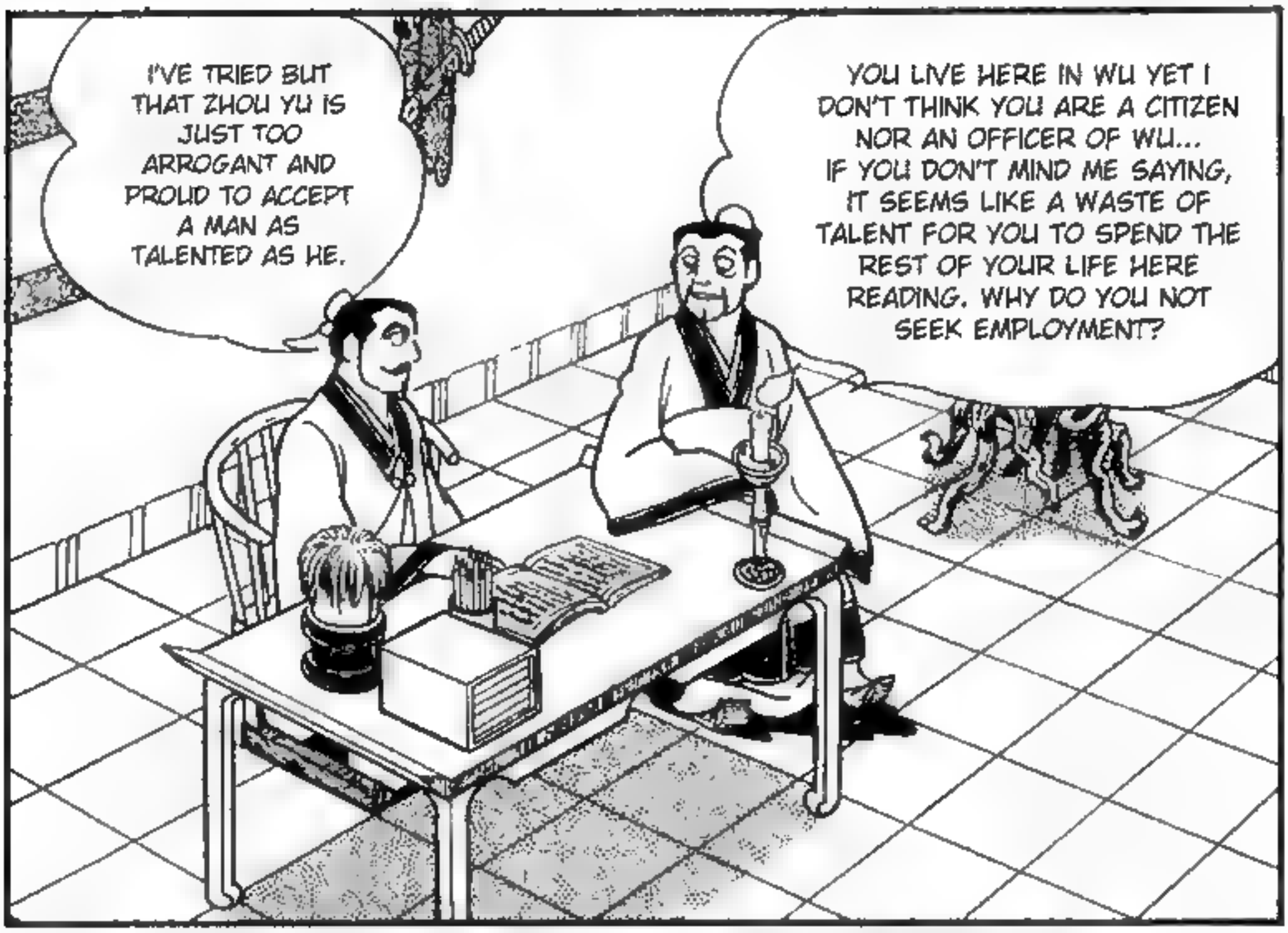
PANG TONG? YOU MEAN *THE* PANG TONG!?

HM?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, SIR.

PLEASE, COME IN.

I NEVER WOULD'VE IMAGINED THAT A MAN AS TALENTED AS SIR WOULD BE HOLED UP IN THESE SECLUDED MOUNTAINS.


I'VE TRIED BUT THAT ZHOU YU IS JUST TOO ARROGANT AND PROUD TO ACCEPT A MAN AS TALENTED AS HE.
YOU LIVE HERE IN WU YET I DON'T THINK YOU ARE A CITIZEN NOR AN OFFICER OF WU... IF YOU DON'T MIND ME SAYING, IT SEEMS LIKE A WASTE OF TALENT FOR YOU TO SPEND THE REST OF YOUR LIFE HERE READING. WHY DO YOU NOT SEEK EMPLOYMENT?

DANGER-OUS?
IT IS TOO DANGER-OUS.

THEN WHY NOT TRY YOUR LUCK WITH CAO CAO?

NOT TRUE?

YES, AS LONG AS I INTRODUCE YOU TO HIM, THAT IS.

THAT'S NOT TRUE AT ALL.

I'VE HEARD THAT CAO CAO HIGHLY VALUES MEN OF ABILITY BUT I'M CURRENTLY LIVING IN WU, A STATE WHICH HE IS AT WAR WITH. I HIGHLY DOUBT HE WOULD TAKE ME IN.

AH, SO YOU'RE A WEI SPY?

YOU SEE, I'VE ACTUALLY COME HERE ON CAO CAO'S ORDERS TO TRY AND PERSUADE ZHOU YU TO SURRENDER.

SPY, AGENT, WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

OH, I DIDN'T COME HERE TO SPY OR ANYTHING. I'M MORE OF AN AGENT OF WEI.

THEN WHY NOT COME TO WEI WITH ME?

BUT WORRY NOT, IT'S NOT AS IF I'M AN OFFICER OF WU NOR AM I INDEBTED TO IT.

WELL, I DID WANT TO FINALLY PUT MY SKILLS TO USE...

HMM...

I'LL BE SURE TO PUT IN A GOOD WORD FOR YOU TO THE CHANCELLOR.

IS THAT A YES?

YES.

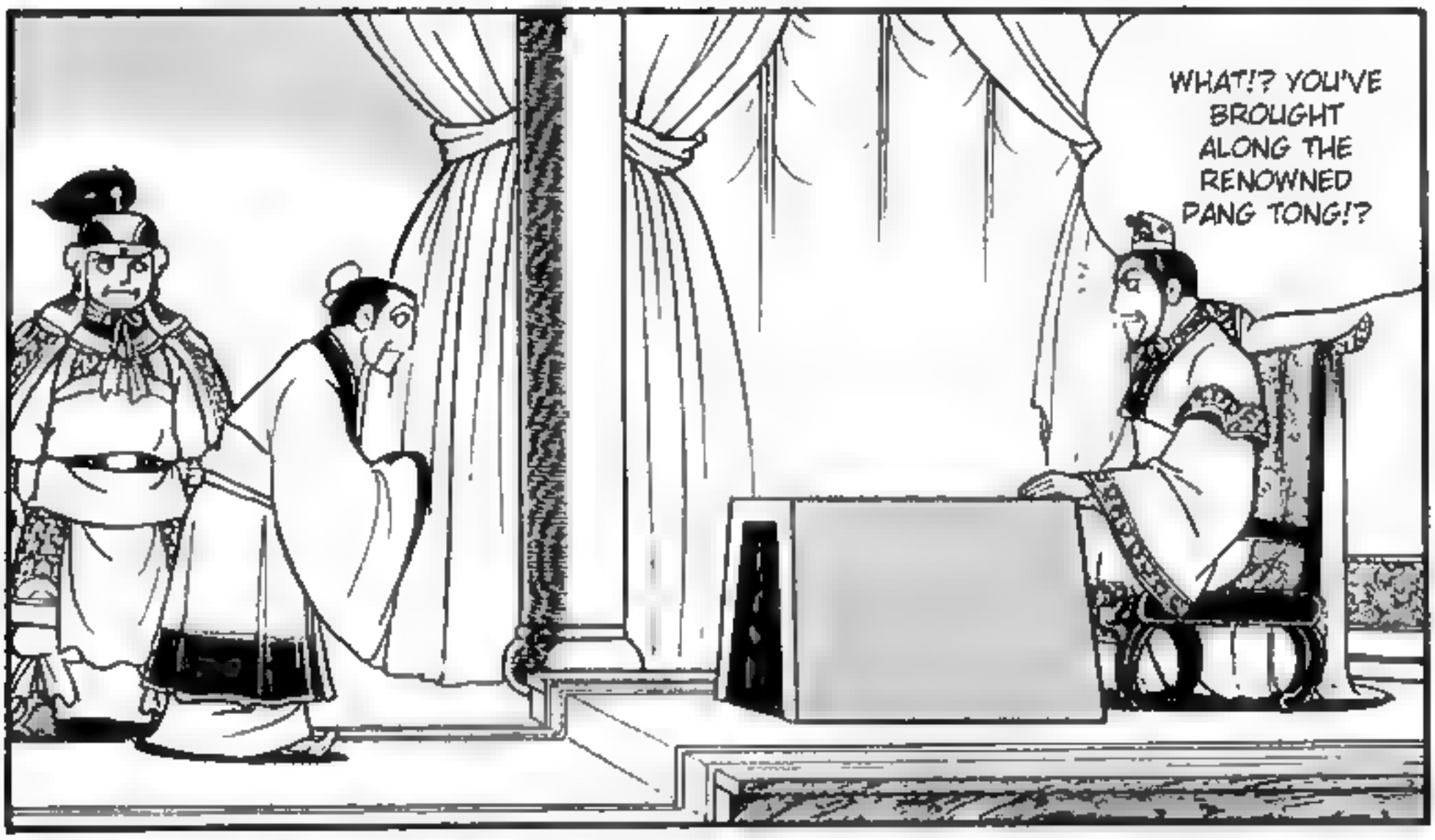
THEN THE SOONER WE LEAVE, THE BETTER.

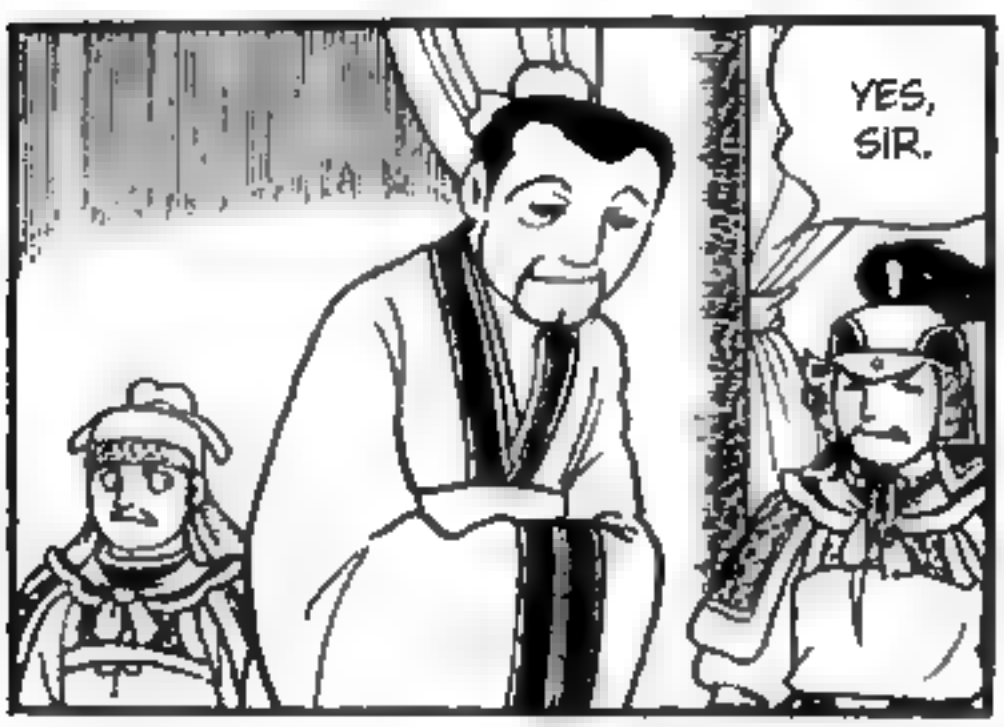
YES IT IS.

I KNOW THESE MOUNTAINS VERY WELL SO ALLOW ME TO LEAD THE WAY.

OHH!
THERE, WE'VE REACHED THE GREAT RIVER.

THE TRICKERY SEEN THROUGH





MIGHT I ASK WHY YOU'VE DECIDED TO COME HERE?

NO, IT IS AN HONOUR FOR *ME* TO MEET *YOU*.

IT IS AN HONOUR TO MEET YOU, SIR. I AM PANG TONG.

I SEE!

I'VE LONG HEARD RUMOURS OF HOW YOU TREAT THOSE WITH TALENT KINDLY REGARDLESS OF THEIR STATUS BUT IT WAS ONLY AFTER MEETING JIANG GAN THE OTHER DAY THAT I WAS CONVINCED THOSE WERE NO MERE RUMOURS.

SERVANTS! PREPARE A BANQUET FOR OUR GUEST!

THANK YOU, SIR.

THANK YOU FOR BRINGING MASTER PANG TONG TO ME, JIANG GAN. YOU SHALL BE REWARDED GREATLY.

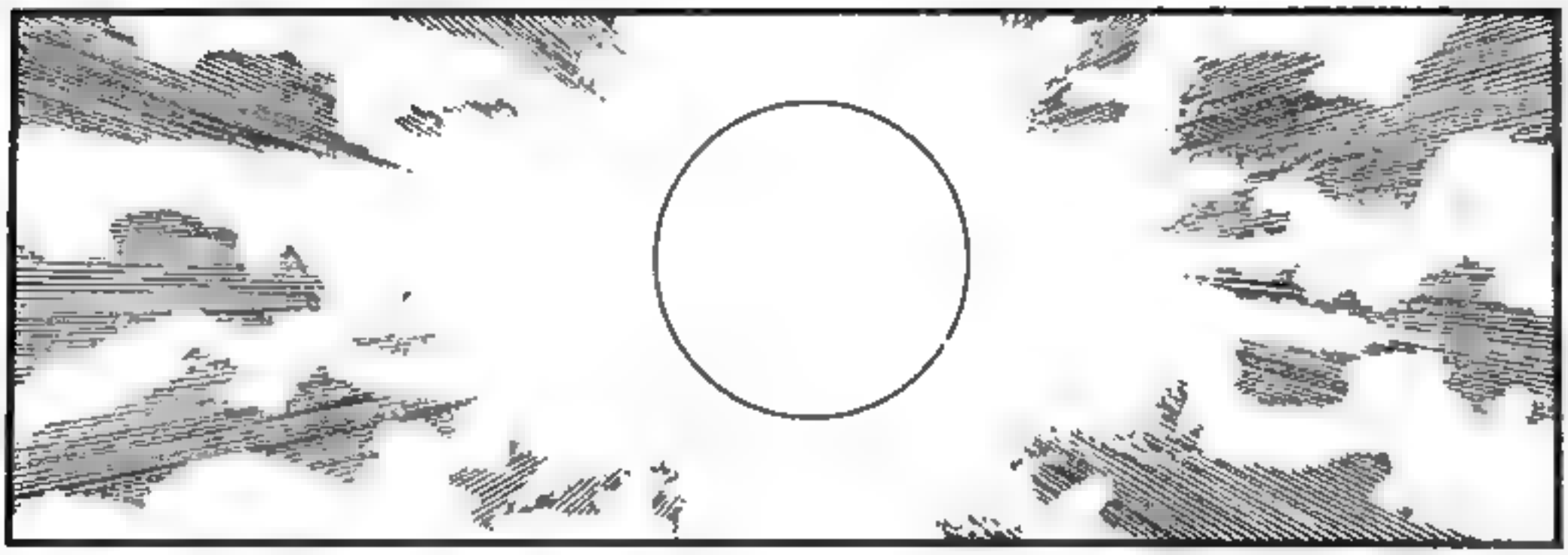
HA HA HA HA HA HA

HA HA HA HA HA HA

CAO CAO WAS HAPPIER THAT NIGHT THAN HE HAD BEEN IN A LONG TIME

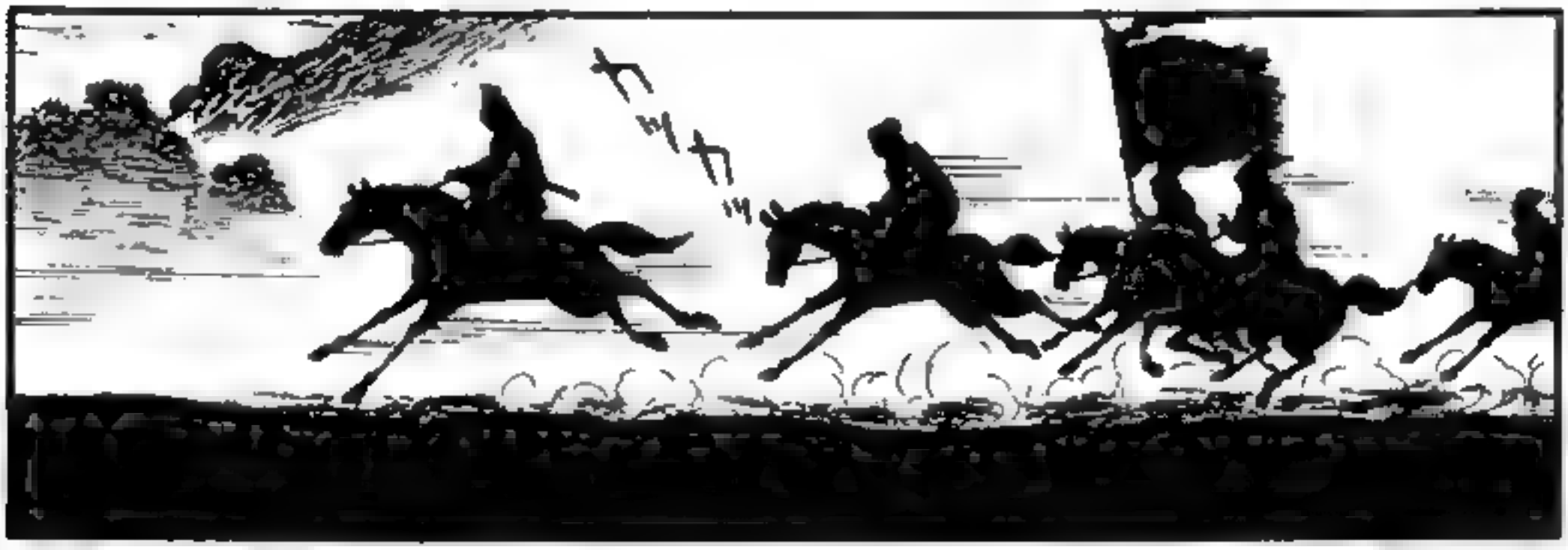
I FEEL THE SAME WAY, CHANCELLOR.

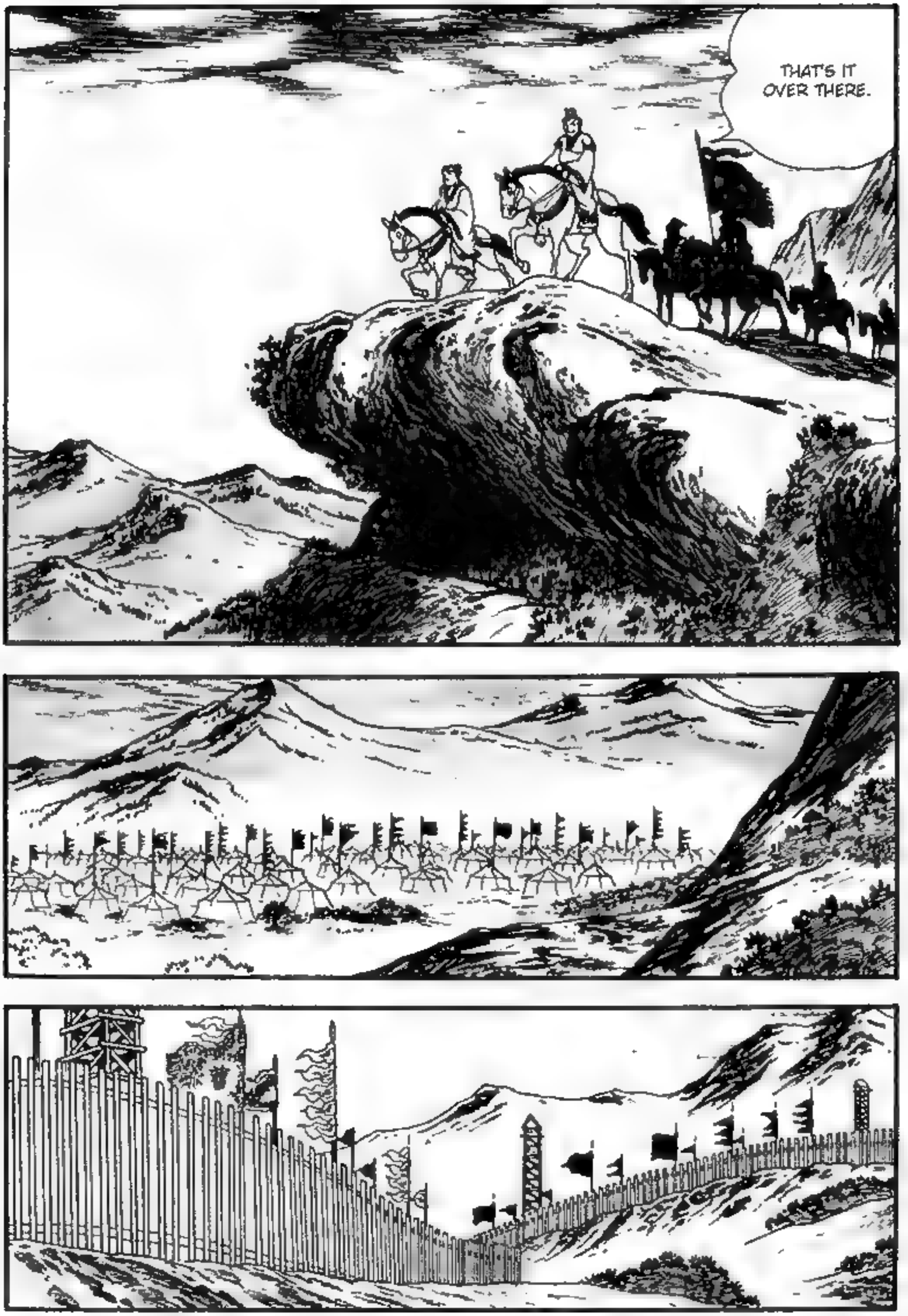
I AM DELIGHTED BEYOND WORDS TO BE ABLE TO SPEAK WITH A SAGE SUCH AS YOU.



I'M SURE YOUR DISCERNING EYES COULD EASILY SEE ANY POTENTIAL WEAKNESSES.

OF COURSE, SIR.
WOULD YOU MIND LOOKING OVER MY ENCAMPMENTS TODAY?




THAT'S IT OVER THERE.

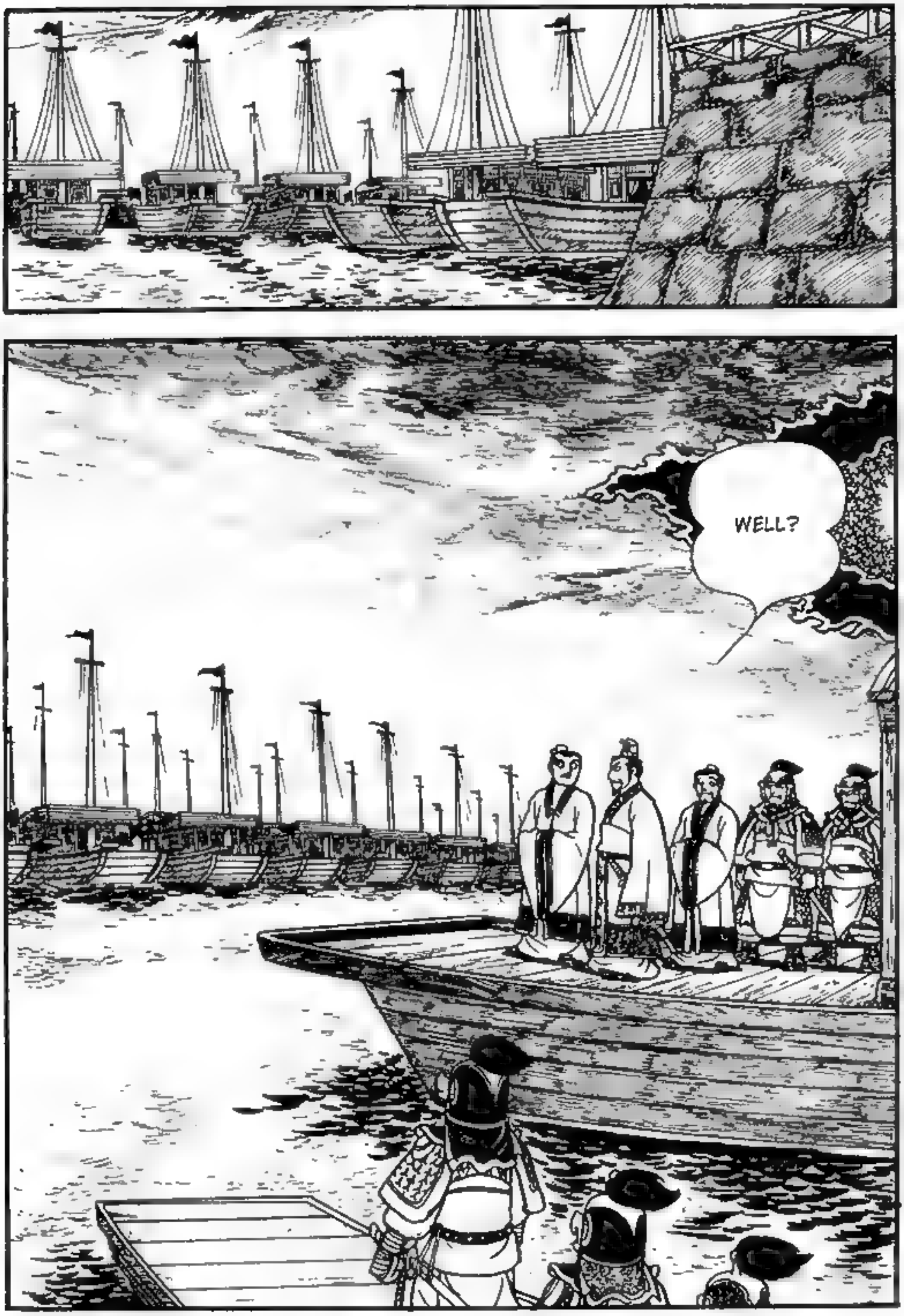
ANY WEAK-NESSES YOU SEE?

HMM... EXCELLENT USEAGE OF HILLS AND FORESTS FOR SOLID DEFENSE WHILE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE GREAT RIVER OUT IN THE FRONT.

REALLY? TO HEAR YOU SAY SUCH WORDS IS VERY REASSURING.

NO, EVERYTHING IS IN LINE WITH PROPER MILITARY DOCTRINES. I DOUBT EVEN SUN TZU OR WU QI COULD DO BETTER.

NEXT, PLEASE LOOK OVER MY NAVY.


WELL?

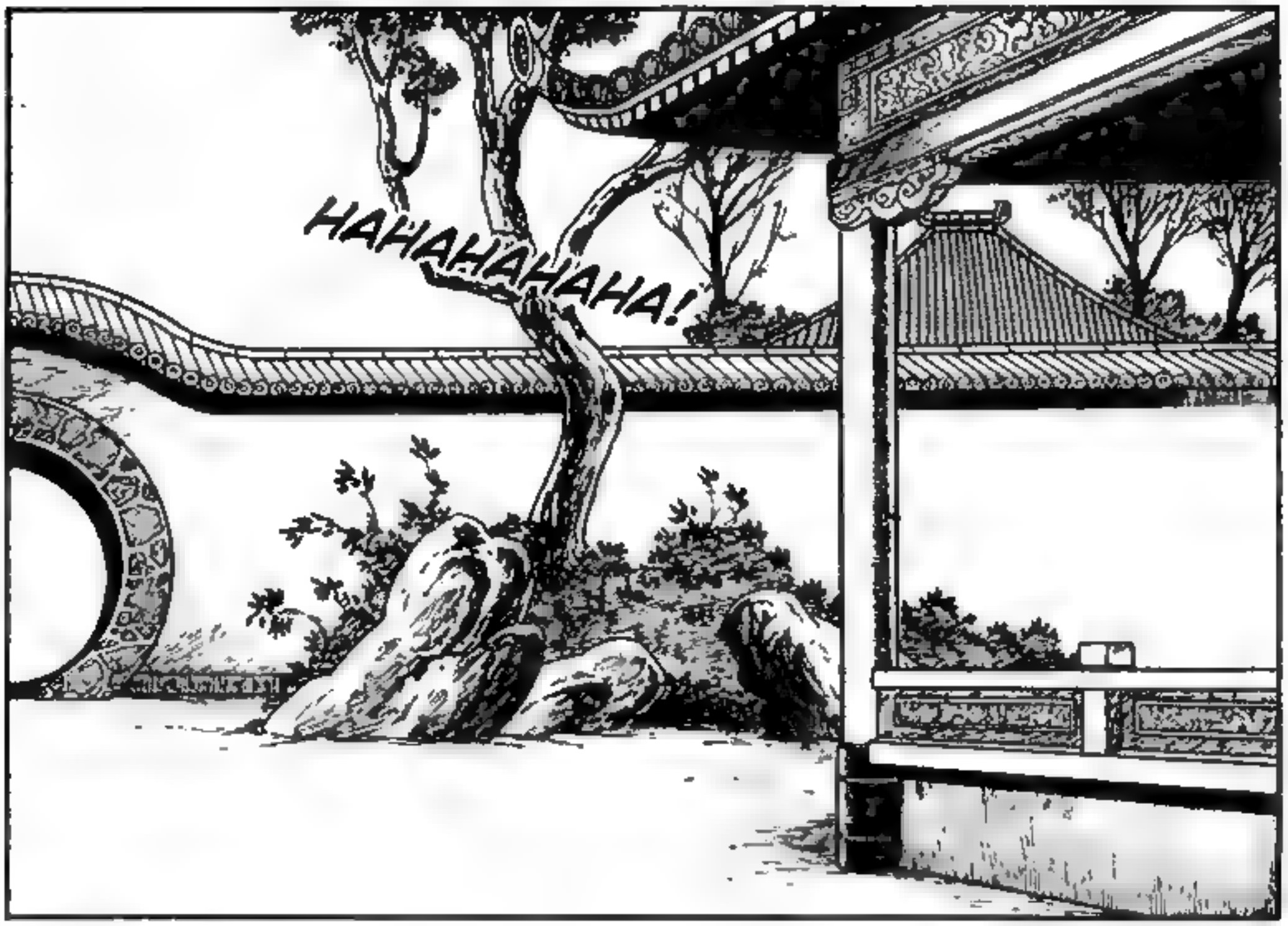
ZHOU YU BOASTS THAT NO MAN CAN BEST HIM IN NAVAL WARFARE BUT LOOKING AT THIS, I AM INCLINED TO DISAGREE.

I HAD HEARD THE CHANCELLOR WAS A SKILLED STRATEGIST BUT I HAD NOT EXPECTED TO SEE SUCH MASTERY.

AHAHAHA! SPLENDID!

IT TRULY IS PERFECT.

LET US RETURN BACK TO THE MAIN HOUSE. I WISH TO ASK FOR YOUR VALUABLE OPINION ON OTHER MATTERS.


HAHAHAHAHA!

EXCUSE ME FOR A MOMENT.

THE PLEASURE IS ALL MINE, S R.
THERE IS NOTHING MORE ENJOYABLE FOR ME THAN TO DRINK FINE WINE WHILE LEARNING FROM A SAGE.

IT'S HARD TO SAY... THEY BOTH SEEM EQUAL TO ME, SIR.
JIANG GAN, WHICH DO YOU THINK IS BETTER? KONGMING OR PANG TONG?

MY APOLO-GIES FOR LEAVING THE TABLE.

NO, IT'S NOTHING. I'M ONLY A LITTLE SEASICK FROM BEING ON THE BOAT EARLIER TODAY. MY BODY IS RATHER SENSITIVE, YOU SEE.

YOU DON'T SEEM WELL, IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG?

SEEING AS HOW THERE WOULD BE MANY DOCTORS IN YOUR CAMP, I WOULD BE MOST GRATEFUL, CHANCELLOR.

THAT'S VERY UNFORTUNATE TO HEAR. SHALL I CALL A DOCTOR?

EXCELLENT DEDUCTION, MASTER PANG TONG.

THE MAJORITY OF YOUR ARMY IS COMPOSED OF NORTHERNERS, IS IT NOT? I WOULD ASSUME THEM TO BE UNUSED TO THESE SOUTHERN CLIMATES AND WORKING ON BOATS.

HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT I HAVE MANY DOCTORS AT MY CAMP?

I SEE...

THE TRUTH IS, MANY OF MY SOLDIERS HAVE BEEN SUFFERING FROM SEASICKNESS AND OTHER ILLNESSES.

YES, I DO HAVE ONE SOLUTION.

DO YOU HAVE ANY GOOD IDEAS ON HOW TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM?

TO FIX THIS, YOU MUST RETURN THEM TO THEIR FORMER LIFESTYLES AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, IT IS NOT PRACTICAL TO HAVE THEM ENTIRELY ABANDON THEIR NAVAL DUTIES.

THE REASON WHY YOUR SOLDIERS ARE SO PRONE TO SICKNESS IS BECAUSE THEY CANNOT EAT A PROPER MEAL AFTER BEING SEASICK AND BATTERED BY THE ELEMENTS ALL DAY LONG.

THUS, A SLIGHT ADJUSTMENT TO YOUR NAVAL ENCAMPMENTS ARE NEEDED. FIRST, GROUP THE SHIPS ACCORDING TO THEIR RELATIVE SIZES.

DOING SO WOULD ALLOW THE SOLDIERS TO WALK LIKE THEY'RE ON LAND WITH MINIMAL ROCKING OF THE BOATS FROM THE WAVES. THIS SHOULD ELIMINATE YOUR SEASICKNESS TROUBLES.

SECOND, IN EACH OF THOSE GROUPS, USE IRON CHAINS TO CONNECT ALL THE SHIPS AND PUT UP WOODEN BOARDS TO SERVE AS BRIDGES FOR THE SOLDIERS TO EASILY MOVE ACROSS SHIPS.

IF ZHOU YU WERE TO FIND OUT, HE WOULD SURELY COMMENCE HIS ATTACK RIGHT AWAY.

JUST BE SURE NOT TO LET WU KNOW ABOUT YOUR ARMY'S ILLNESS PROBLEMS.

HMM, A SOUND PLAN INDEED.

TRUE, ZHOU YU WOULD NEVER LET SUCH A VALUABLE CHANCE GO TO WASTE IF HE HEARD MY ARMY WAS FULL OF SICK SOLDIERS...

ALRIGHT, I SHALL CARRY OUT YOUR PLAN FIRST THING TOMORROW.

I MUST DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

THE NEXT DAY, CAO CAO CALLED UP HUNDREDS OF BLACKSMITHS TO MAKE IRON CHAINS FOR THE SHIPS

MOST IMPRESSIVE.

WITH ALL THESE BLACKSMITHS WORKING NIGHT AND DAY, THOSE IRON CHAINS SHOULD BE COMPLETED IN NO TIME.

I PERSONALLY KNOW AT LEAST 5 OFFICERS WHO RESENT ZHOU YU.

BY THE WAY, DURING MY TIME IN WU, I COULDN'T HELP BUT NOTICE THAT MANY OF THEIR OFFICERS DIDN'T LOOK TOO HAPPY TO OBEY ZHOU YU.

I SAY THIS BECAUSE I BELIEVE THE CHANCELLOR MUST START FOCUSING ON ELIMINATING LIU BEI AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

I'M SURE IF WE CAN CONVINCE THEM TO START A REBELLION WITHIN, WU WOULD ONLY BE TOO EASY TO CONQUER.

THEN SHALL I GO OVER TO WU TO TRY AND PERSUADE A NUMBER OF WU OFFICERS TO BETRAY ZHOU YU?

YES, I ACTUALLY CONSIDER LIU BEI THE GREATER THREAT AS WELL. I MUST HURRY UP AND DEAL WITH HIM BEFORE HE REGAINS HIS STRENGTH.

GLADLY, SIR.

OHH, YOU WOULD DO THAT FOR ME?

NO, NO. I AM NOT DOING THIS FOR FAME AND WEALTH.

THANK YOU, MASTER PANG TONG. IF YOU SUCCEED, I WOULD GLADLY REWARD YOU WITH ONE OF THE HIGHEST OFFICES.

YES, OF COURSE. YOU HAVE MY WORD THAT THE INNOCENT CIVILIANS SHALL BE UNHARMED. AFTER ALL, ONCE I CONQUER WU, THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE TO LOOK AFTER.

MY MISSION IS TO BETTER HUMANKIND TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITIES. I'VE WITNESSED MANY WARS IN MY LIFETIME AND IT IS ALWAYS THE INNOCENT CIVILIANS THAT SUFFER THE MOST. AND SO, I BEG OF YOU TO HAVE MERCY ON THE CITIZENS OF WU WHEN YOUR ARMY STEP INTO THEIR LANDS.

ALTHOUGH I DO NOT DOUBT THE CHANCELLOR'S WORDS, SOLDIERS CAN BECOME WILD BEASTS AMIDST THE VIOLENCE OF BATTLE.

OF COURSE. THAT IS A SIMPLE REQUEST TO FULFIL.

AT THE VERY LEAST, I WOULD BE OBLIGED IF YOU COULD WRITE A DOCUMENT WITH YOUR SIGNATURE TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF MY FAMILY.

YES, SIR.

GET ME MY BRUSH AND INK.

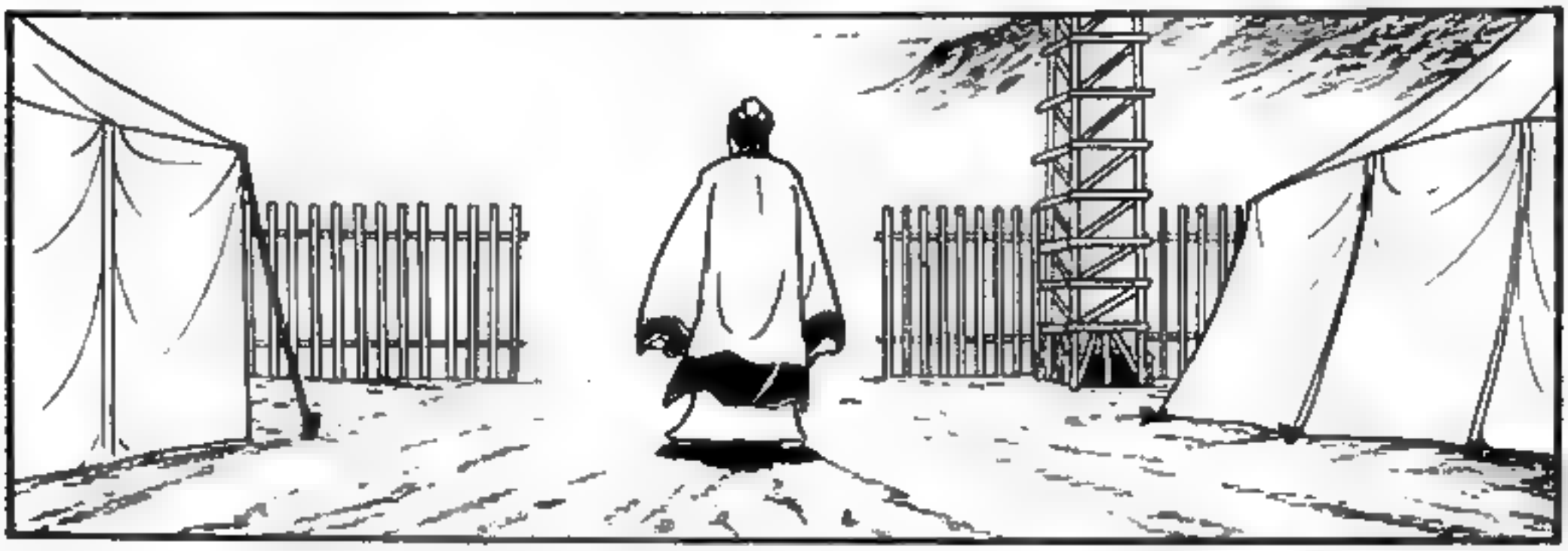
WILL THIS DO?

THE SOLDIERS OF WEI ARE NOT TO HARM ANY OF PANG TONG'S FAMILY UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. BREAKING THIS DECREE SHALL BE PUNISHABLE BY DEATH.

I SHALL TAKE MY LEAVE THEN.

TAKE CARE.

I PRAY FOR YOUR SUCCESS, MASTER PANG TONG.
YES, THIS SHALL DO FINE. THANK YOU, CHANCELLOR.



STOP RIGHT THERE, SPY!

YOU MAY HAVE FOOLED THE CHANCELLOR BUT YOU SHALL NEVER FOOL MY EYES!

WHAT NON-SENSE IS THIS!?

ENOUGH MINCING WORDS, PANG TONG!

I HAVE COME HERE AS THE CHANCELLOR'S GUEST! HOW DARE YOU ACCUSE ME OF BEING A SPY!

I KNOW THAT THIS IS A RUSE THOUGHT UP BY ZHOU YU! FIRST, YOU SEND KAN ZE HERE, AND THEN USE CAI HE AND CAI ZHONG'S LETTERS TO GET THE CHANCELLOR TO SWALLOW WU'S LIES! NOW, YOU COME HERE TO SET UP THE IRON CHAIN STRATEGY SO THAT YOU MAY BURN DOWN CAO CAO'S ENTIRE FLEET!

HAVE YOU ALREADY FORGOTTEN MY VOICE, PANG TONG?

N-NO ...!

YOU WORK UNDER CAO CAO!?

XU SHU!

IT'S ME, XU SHU.

YES.

IF YOU WERE TO TELL CAO CAO THE TRUTH, THE INNOCENT CIVILIANS OF ALL 81 WU COUNTIES SHALL BE TRAMPLED BY THE SOLDIERS OF WEI.

IF IT'S YOU, I'M NOT SURPRISED THAT MY PLOT'S BEEN SEEN THROUGH. BUT COULD YOU PLEASE PLAY THE FOOL AND NOT SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THIS?

MN...

IF I WERE TO TURN A BLIND EYE, THEN I WOULD BE SENDING A MILLION MEN TO THEIR DEATHS.

HA HA HA HA HA

PERHAPS IT WAS HEAVEN'S WILL TO HAVE YOU CATCH ME HERE. I'VE ALREADY PREPARED TO DIE WHEN I CAME HERE SO DO AS YOU WISH.

I'M A MAN WHO HAS ONCE SWORN TO FAITHFULLY SERVE LIU BEI XUANDE AS MY ONE AND ONLY LORD.

WHAT?

PERHAPS I WENT TOO FAR.

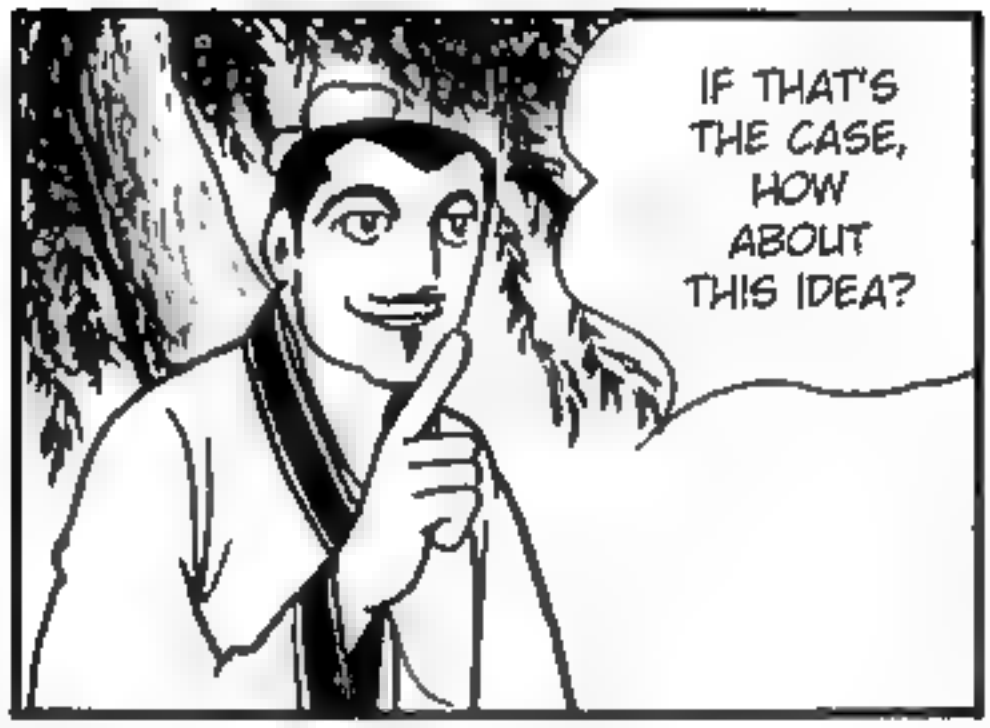
I ONLY ENDED UP COMING TO CAO CAO BECAUSE HE ARRESTED MY MOTHER BUT I HAVE NEVER FORGOTTEN WHERE MY TRUE LOYALTIES LIE.

SO DON'T WORRY, I WAS PLANNING TO TURN A BLIND EYE TO THE WHOLE THING IN THE FIRST PLACE.

WHEN I LEFT LIU BEI, I SWORE THAT I WOULD NEVER THINK UP A SINGLE USEFUL STRATEGY FOR CAO CAO.

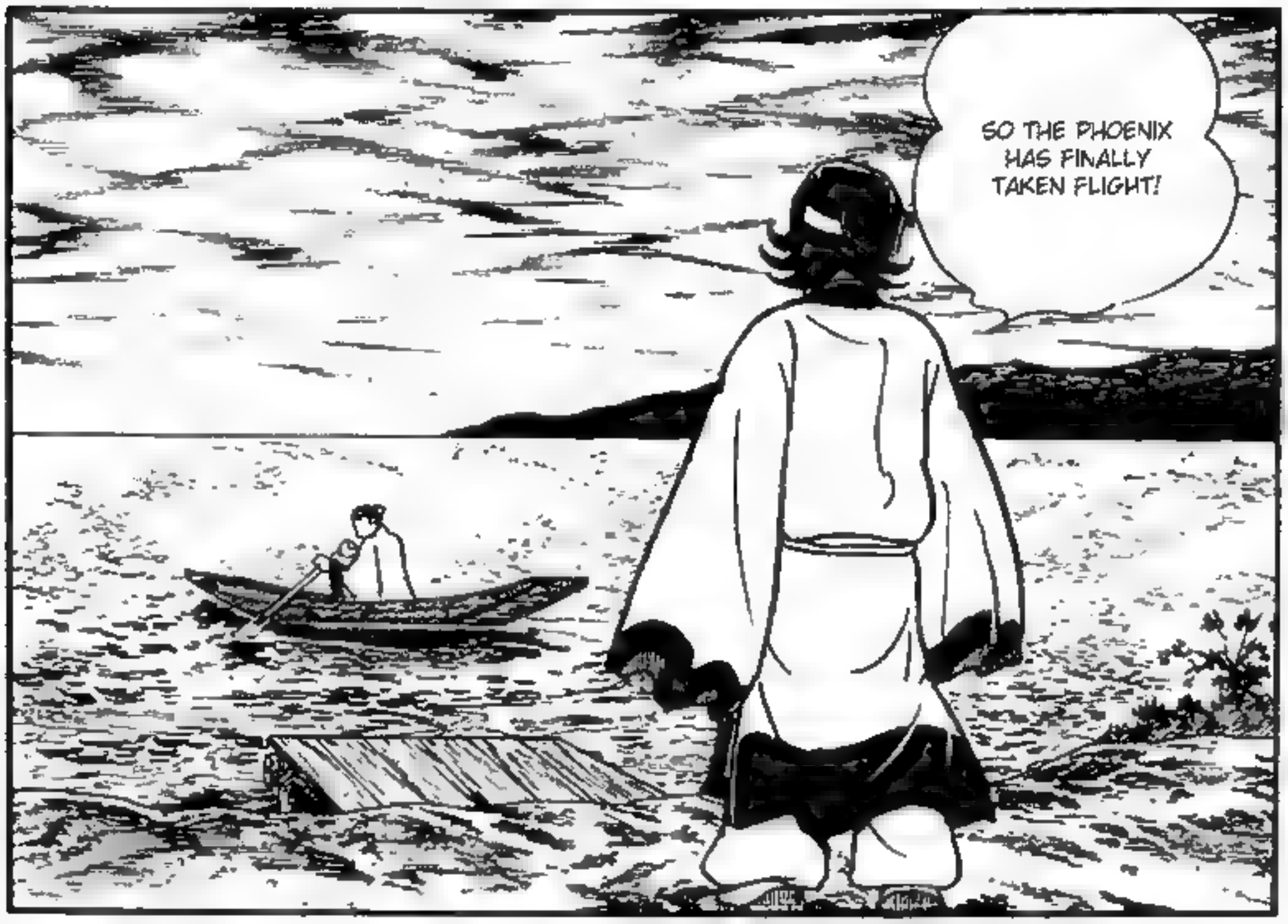
BUT IF YOUR PLAN SUCCEEDS, THEN I WOULD BE BURNT ALIVE AS WELL. DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE ON HOW I CAN SAVE MYSELF?

WHISPER
WHISPER

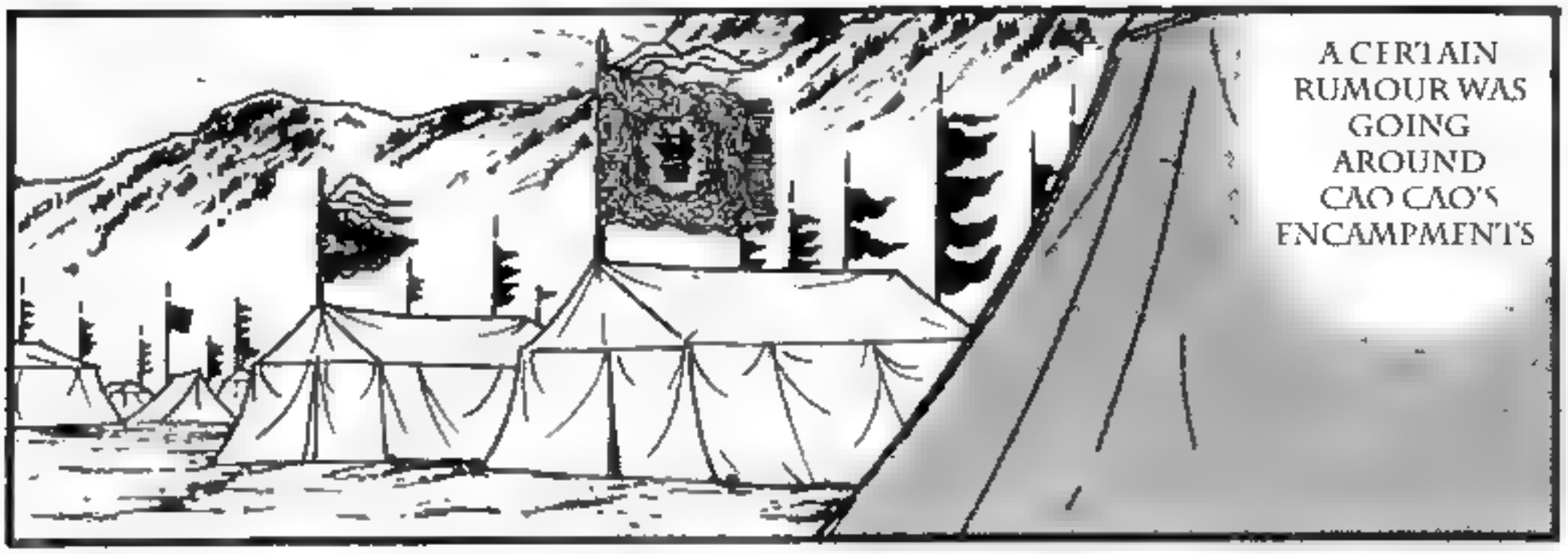

IF THAT'S THE CASE, HOW ABOUT THIS IDEA?

THEN I MUST GET GOING NOW, FRIEND.

YOU TRULY ARE A GENIUS, PANG TONG.


SO THE PHOENIX HAS FINALLY TAKEN FLIGHT!

THE NEXT DAY,


A CERTAIN RUMOUR WAS GOING AROUND CAO CAO'S ENCAMPMENTS

THE RUMOUR WAS ABOUT A POSSIBLE ATTACK ON THE CAPITAL FROM THE NORTH BY HAN SUI AND MA TENG OF XILIANG.

HMM...

IS THERE ANYONE WHO WISHES TO RETURN TO XUCHANG AND PROTECT THE CITY AGAINST THIS POSSIBLE THREAT?

CONSIDERING HOW LONG I'VE LEFT THE CAPITAL, I CAN'T SAY THAT IT'S UNLIKELY.

SAME HERE.

IF YOU ASK ME, I WANT TO STAY HERE WHERE THE REAL ACTION IS.

IT MAY BE NOTHING BUT A RUMOUR BUT IT IS NOT SOMETHING I WOULD LIKE TO BET ON.

ALLOW ME, SIR.

IF WE DO WELL IN FIGHTING WU, THERE'S SURE TO BE A LOT OF PROMOTIONS AND REWARDS HANDED OUT.

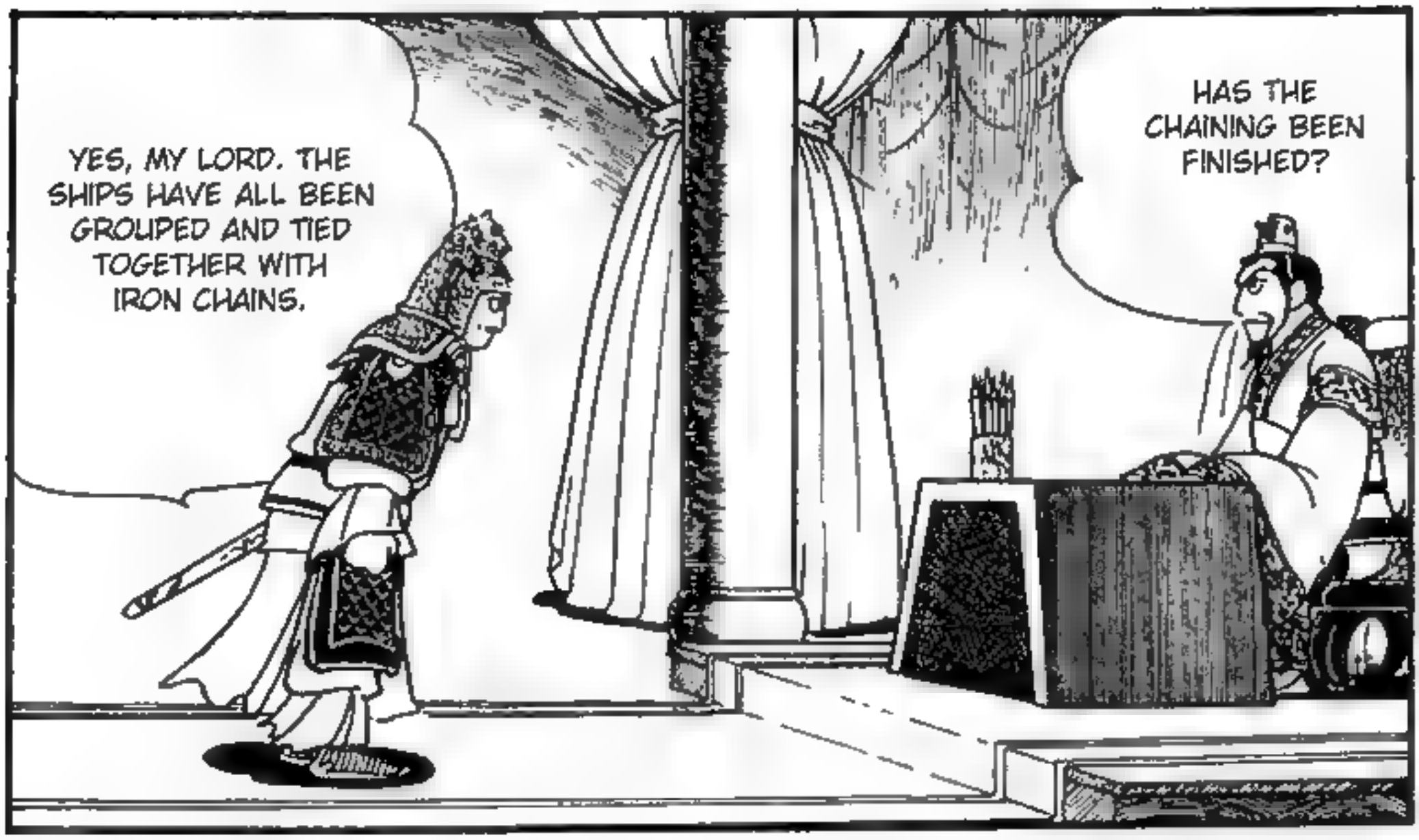
IF THE RUMOUR TURNS OUT TO BE REAL, I SHALL RISK MY LIFE TO GUARD THE CAPITAL WHILE ALERTING YOU RIGHT AWAY.

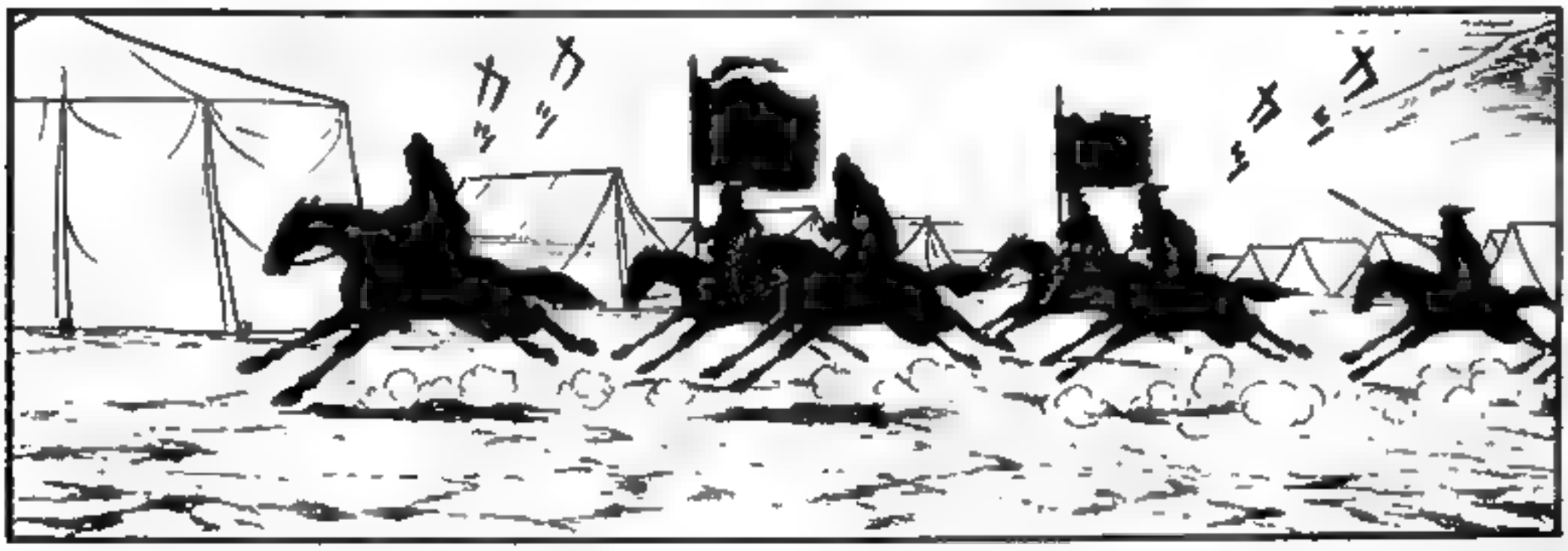
AH, XU SHU! IF IT'S YOU, THEN I HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

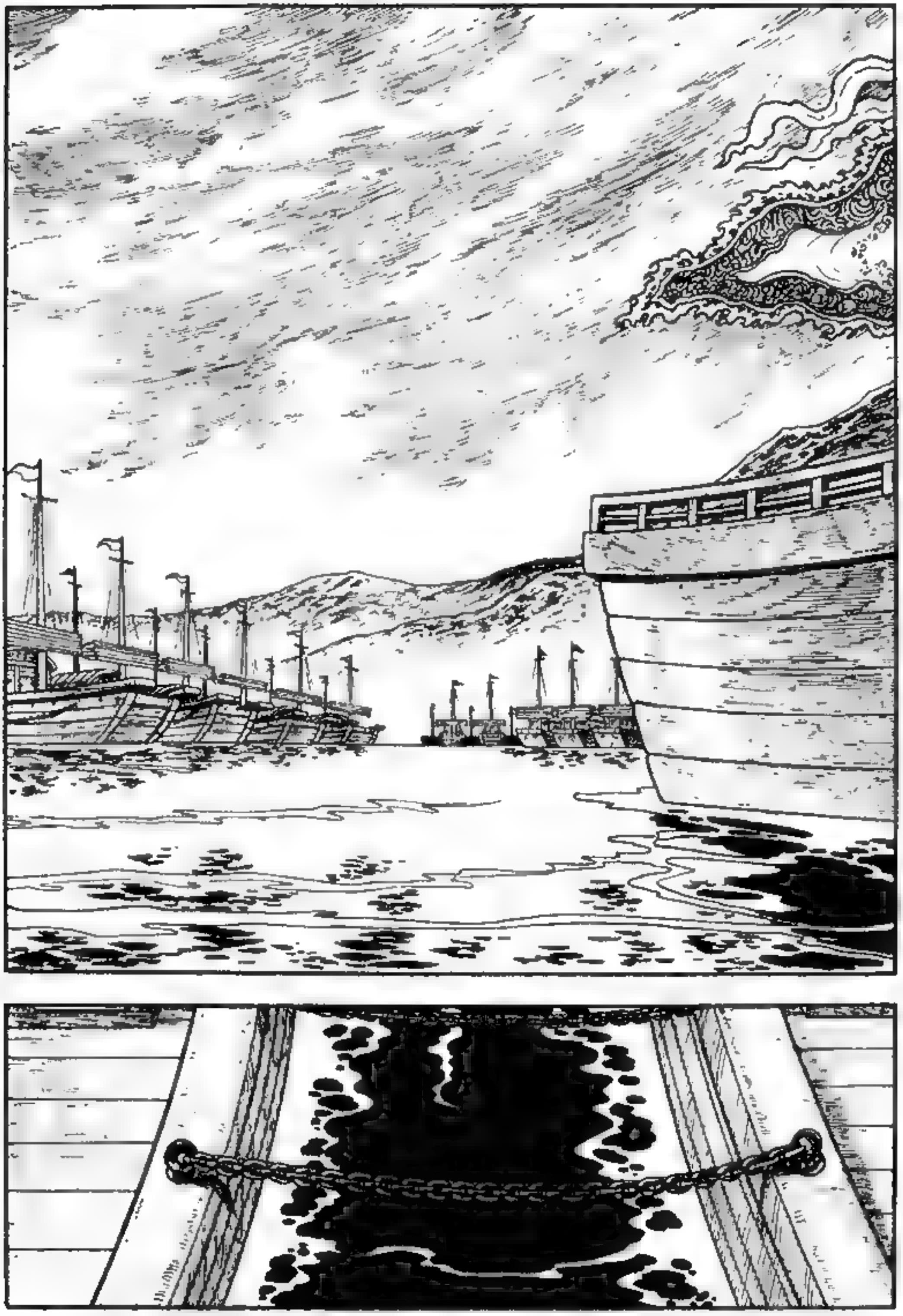
WORRY NOT, SIR.
I WILL BE COUNTING ON YOU.

AND SO, WITH 3000 ELITE SOLDIERS, XU SHU MADE A SAFE ESCAPE FOR XUCHANG

CHAINED FLEET







MEANWHILE, THE VANGUARD FLEET ARE MARKED WITH RED FLAGS,

I SEE.

THE GROUP OF SHIPS IN THE CENTER HAVE ALL BEEN MARKED WITH GOLDEN FLAGS.

WHILE THE LEFT WING IS MARKED WITH BLUE FLAGS.

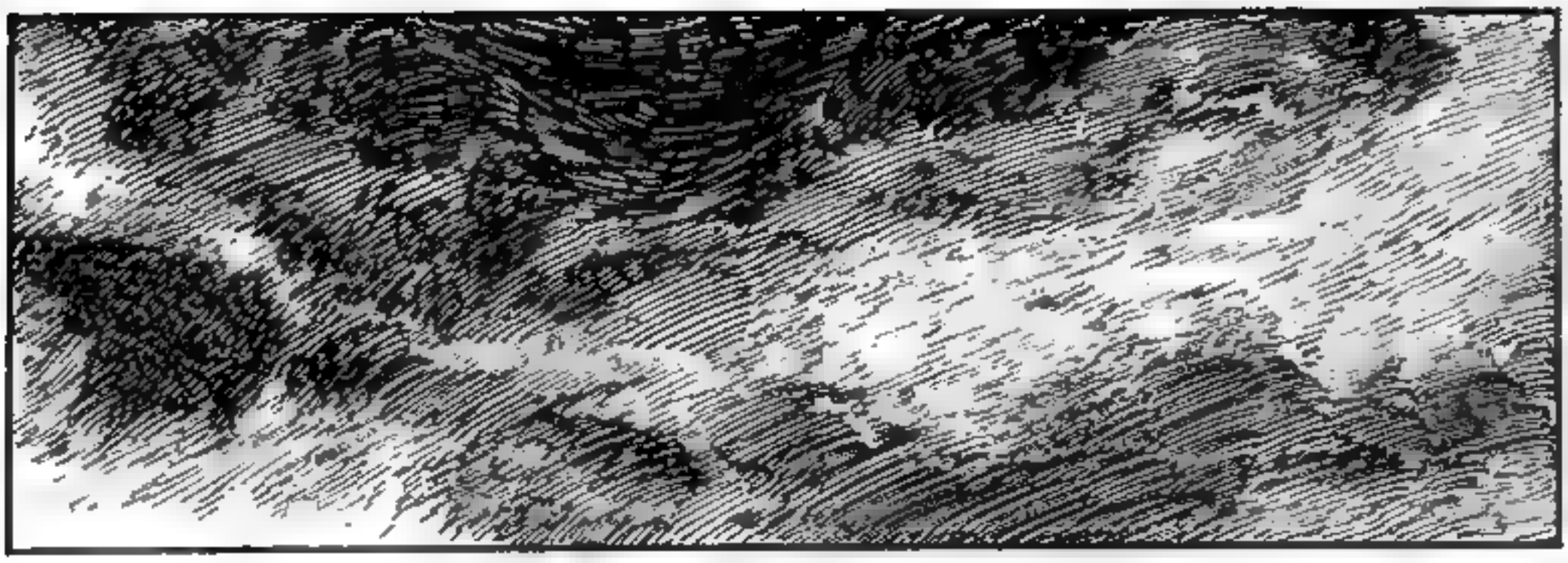
AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST, THE WHITE FLAGS MARK THE RIGHT WING.

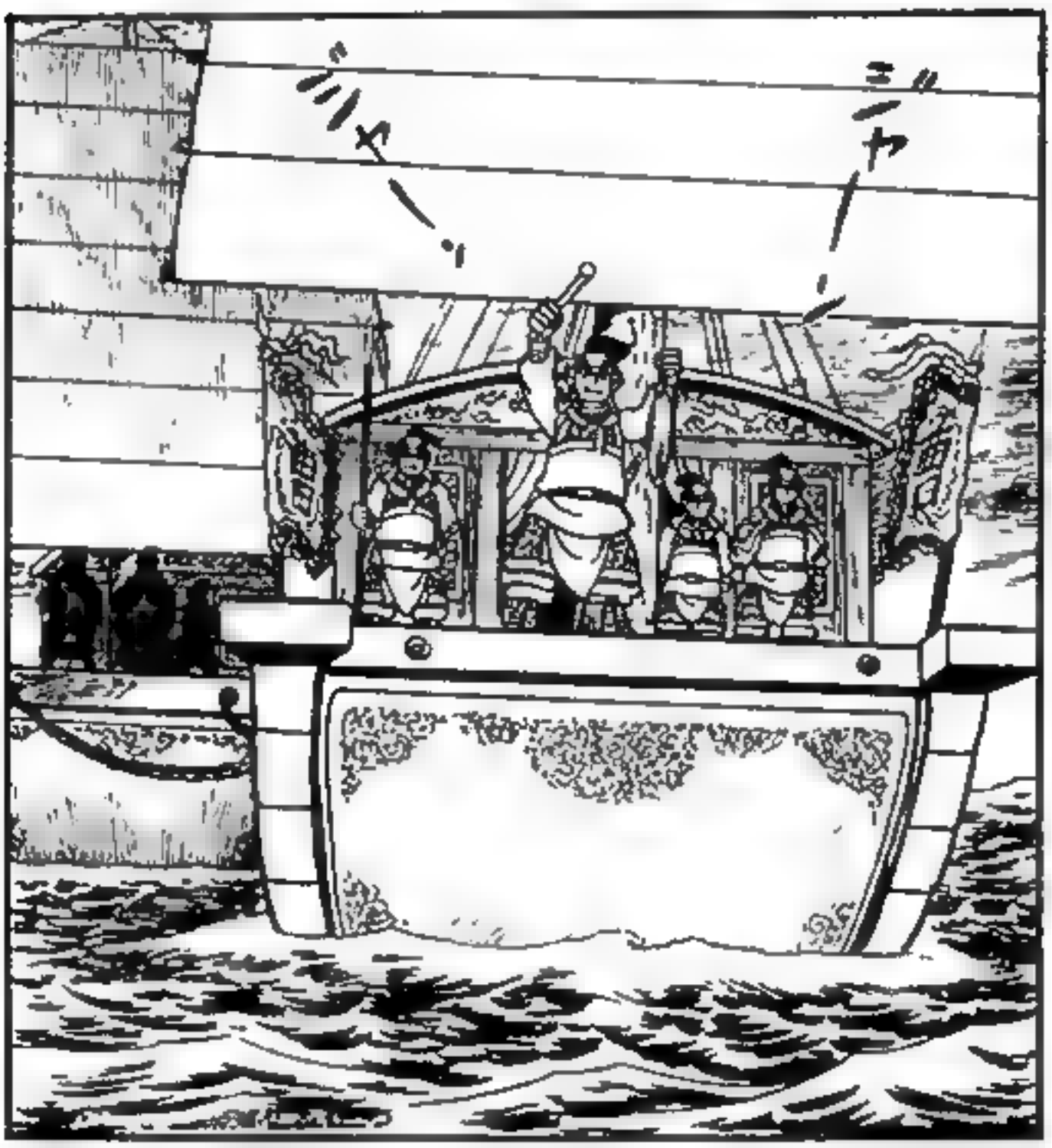
I'VE FOUGHT MANY BATTLES IN MY LIFE BUT I'VE NEVER FOUGHT IN SUCH LARGE NUMBERS AS NOW.

EXCELLENT.

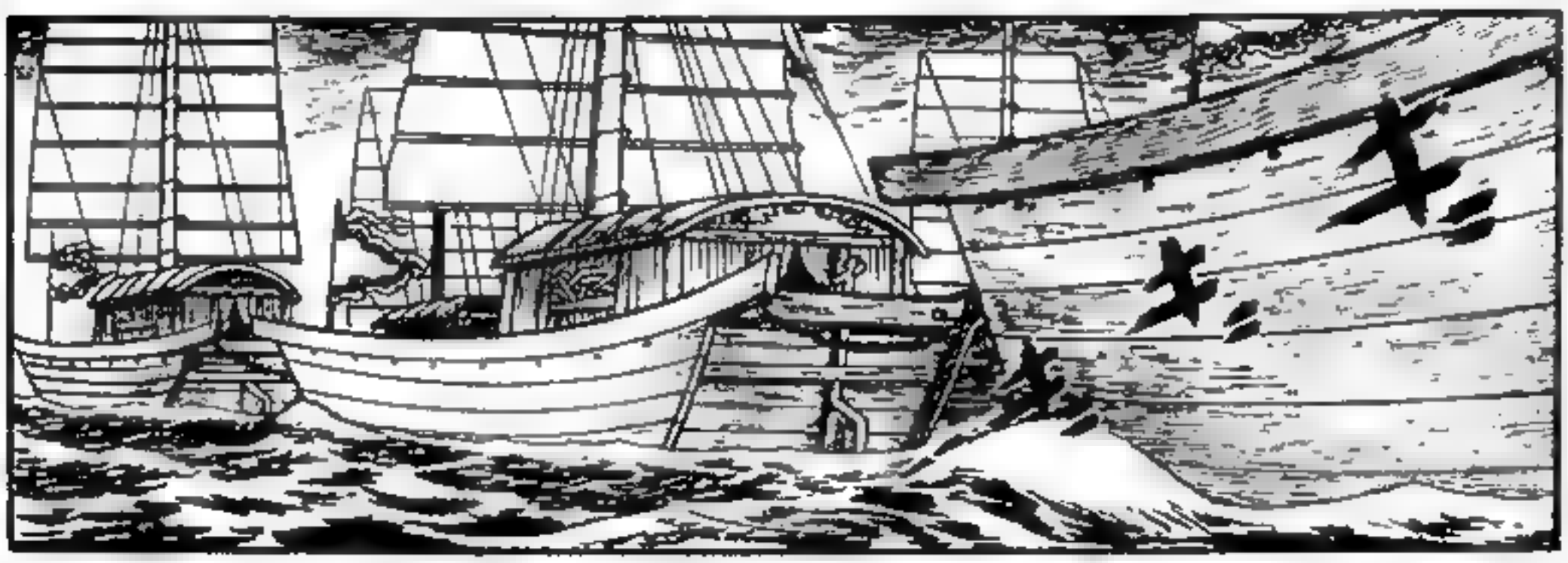
WE SHALL ATTACK TOMORROW!

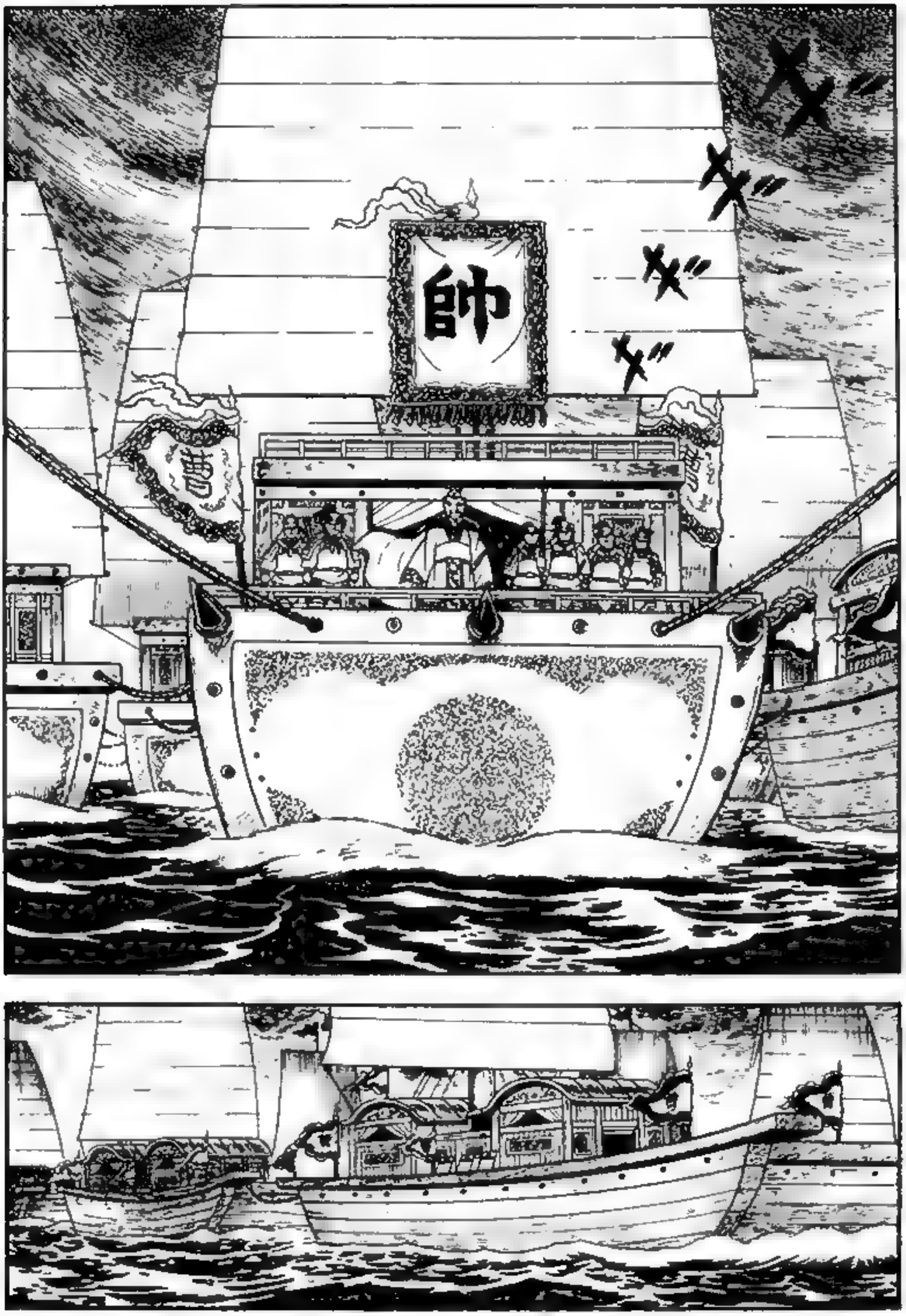
THE TIME HAS FINALLY COME.





CLANG!
CLANG!
CLANG!

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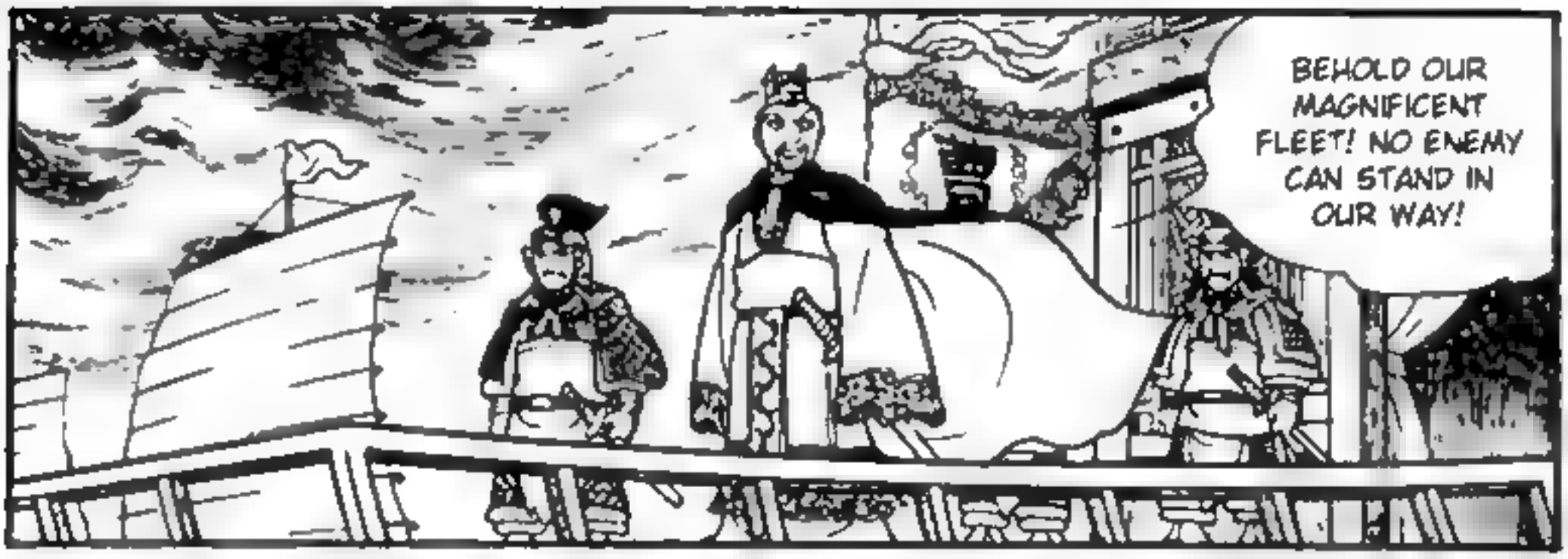
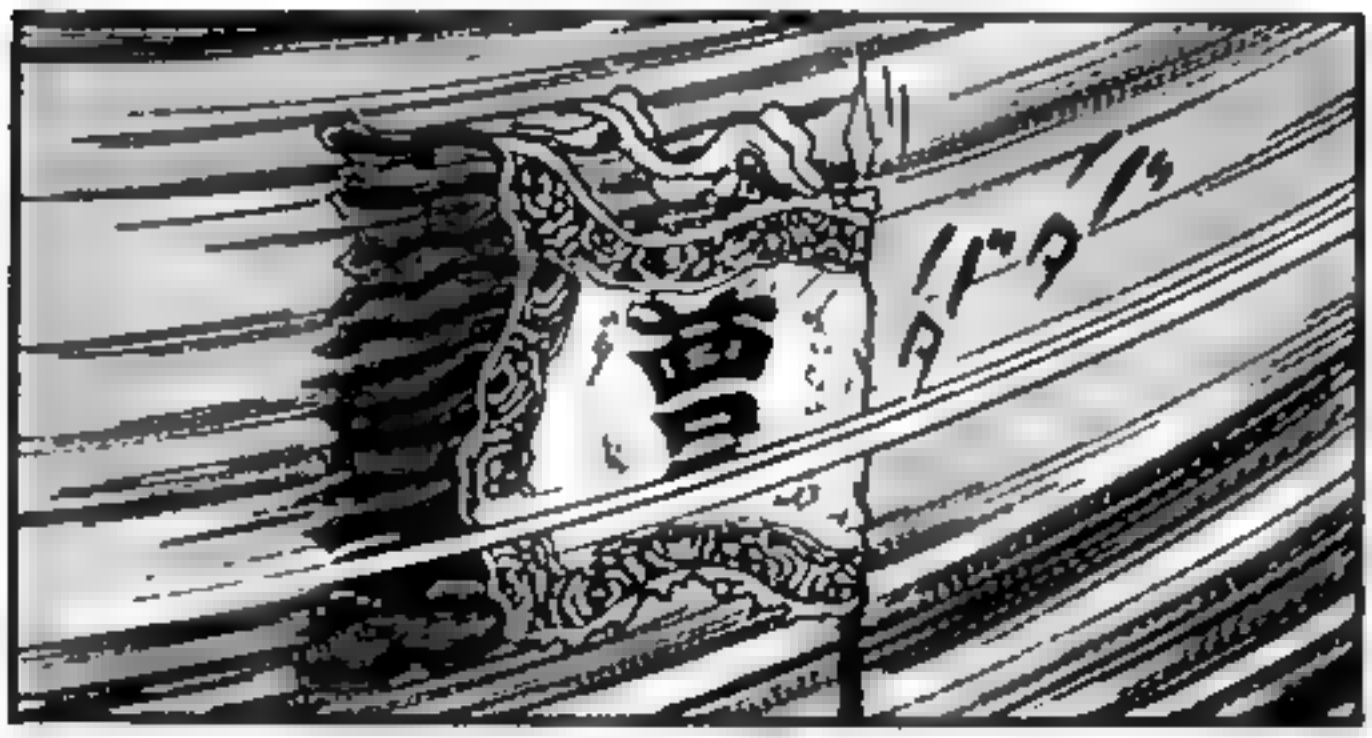

BEHOLD OUR MAGNIFICENT FLEET! NO ENEMY CAN STAND IN OUR WAY!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HMM, THE WINDS ARE BLOWING STRONGER AND STRONGER.

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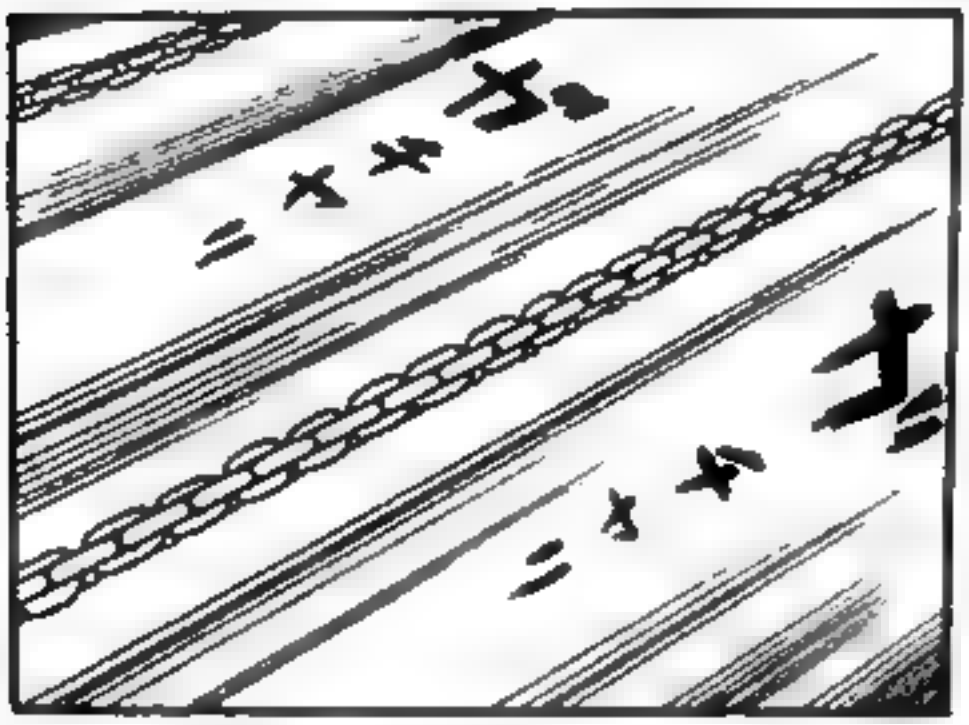
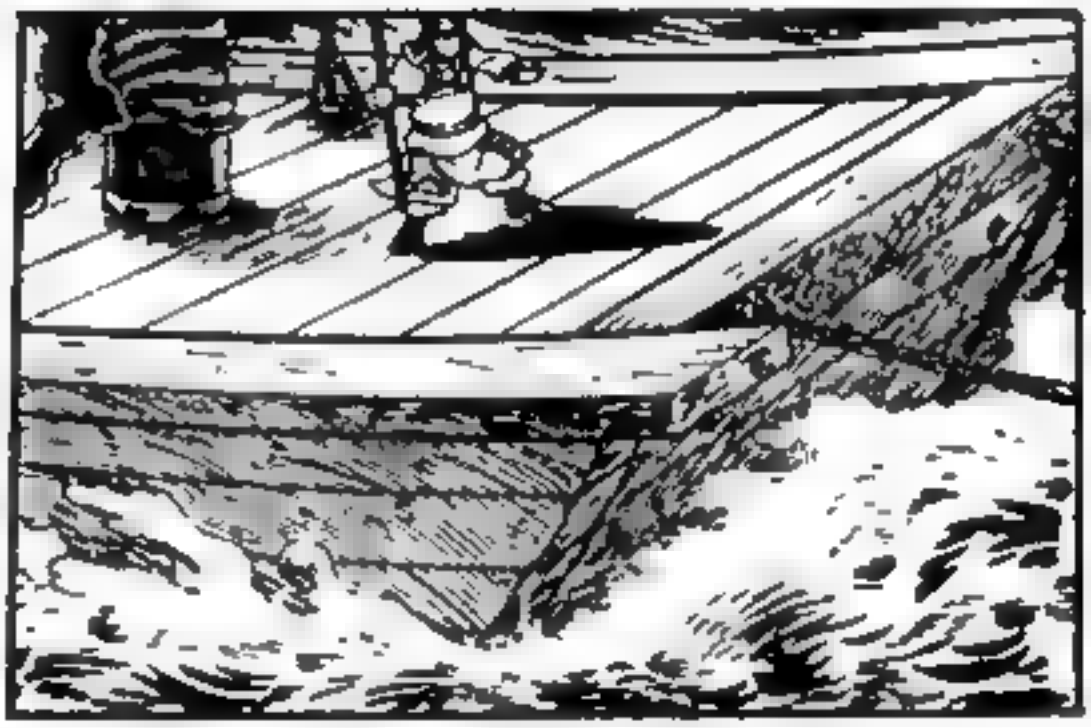
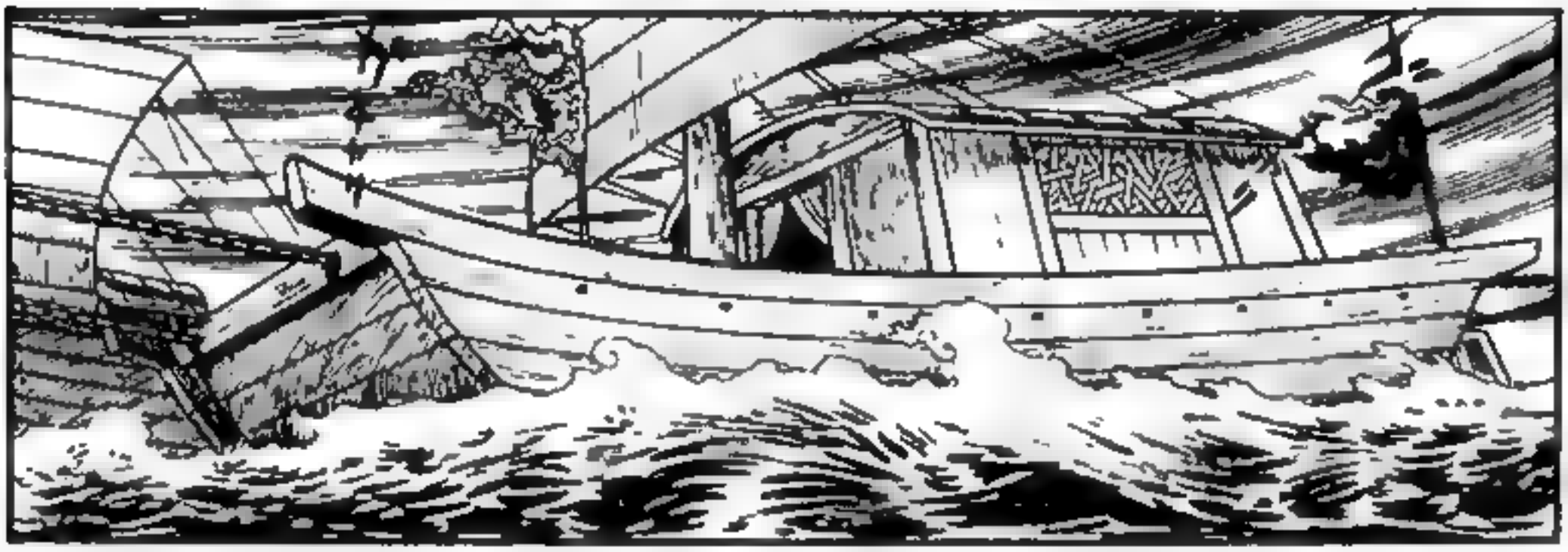


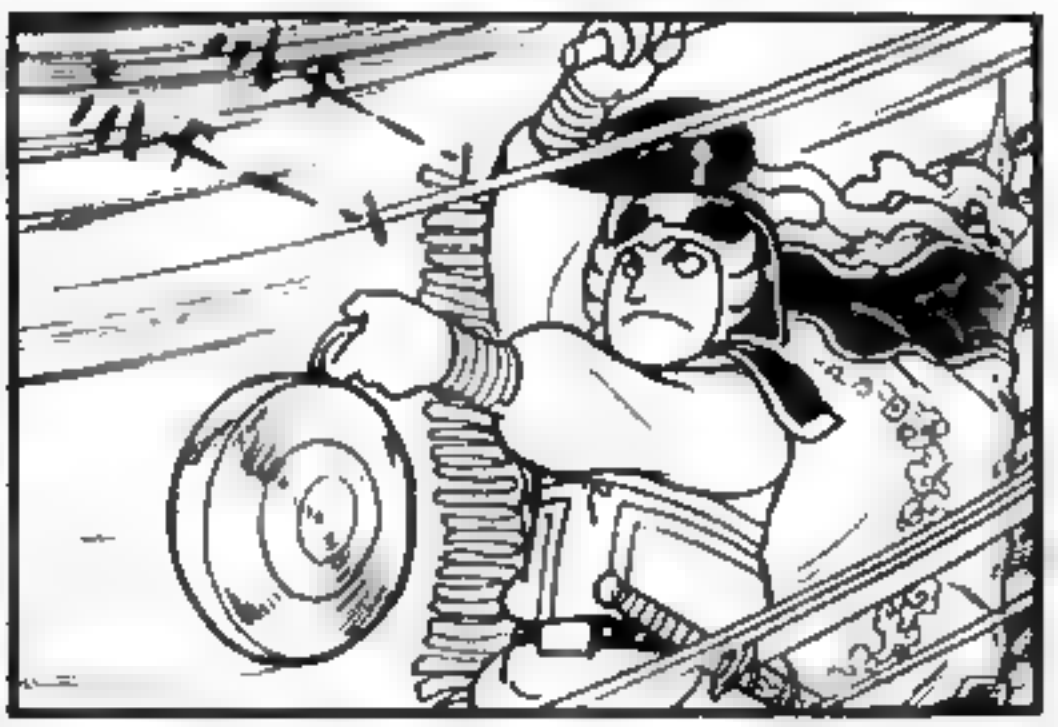


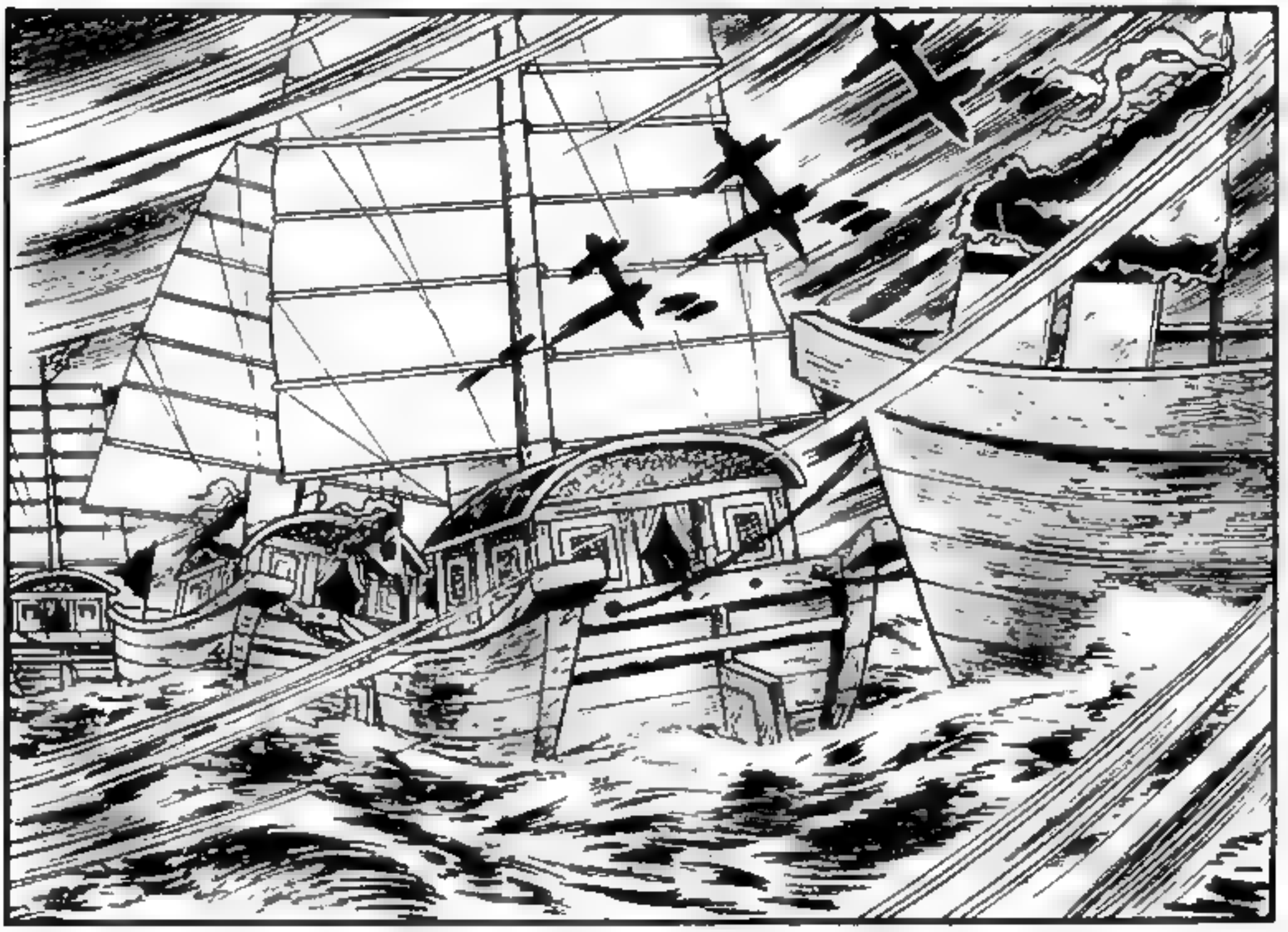


THANK YOU AGAIN, PANG TONG.
LOOK, THE IRON CHAINS ARE PROVIDING STABILITY AS PLANNED.
YES, GOOD IDEA.
MY LORD, WITH THE WINDS BLOWING STRONGER AND STRONGER, I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE BEST TO DOCK THE SHIPS BY THE BAY FOR THE TIME BEING.

SEND OUT THE SIGNAL!

GOOD, ORDER OUR FLEET TO DOCK AT WULIN.
WULIN IS RIGHT UP AHEAD, SIR.





CHAINING THE SHIPS TOGETHER CERTAINLY IS AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO REDUCE SEASICKNESS.

WHAT IS IT?

THERE IS SOMETHING THAT WORRIES ME AFTER SEEING THE STRONG WINDS, MY LORD.

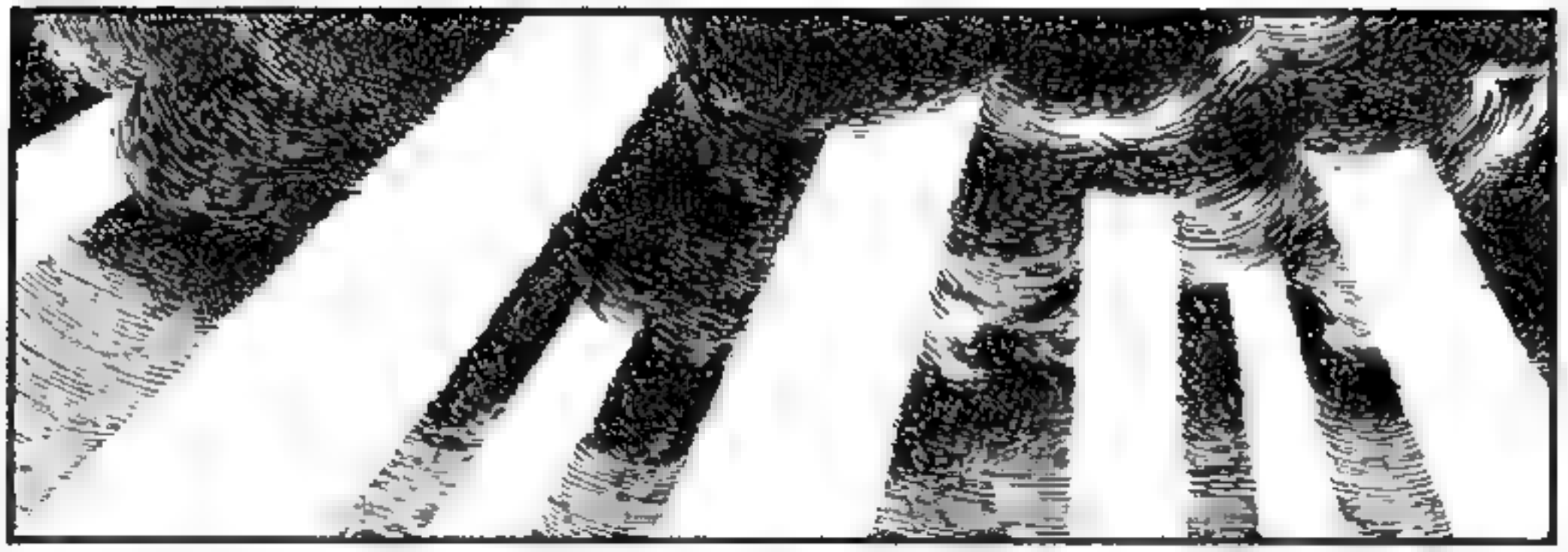
HAHAHAHA, A NEEDLESS CONCERN.

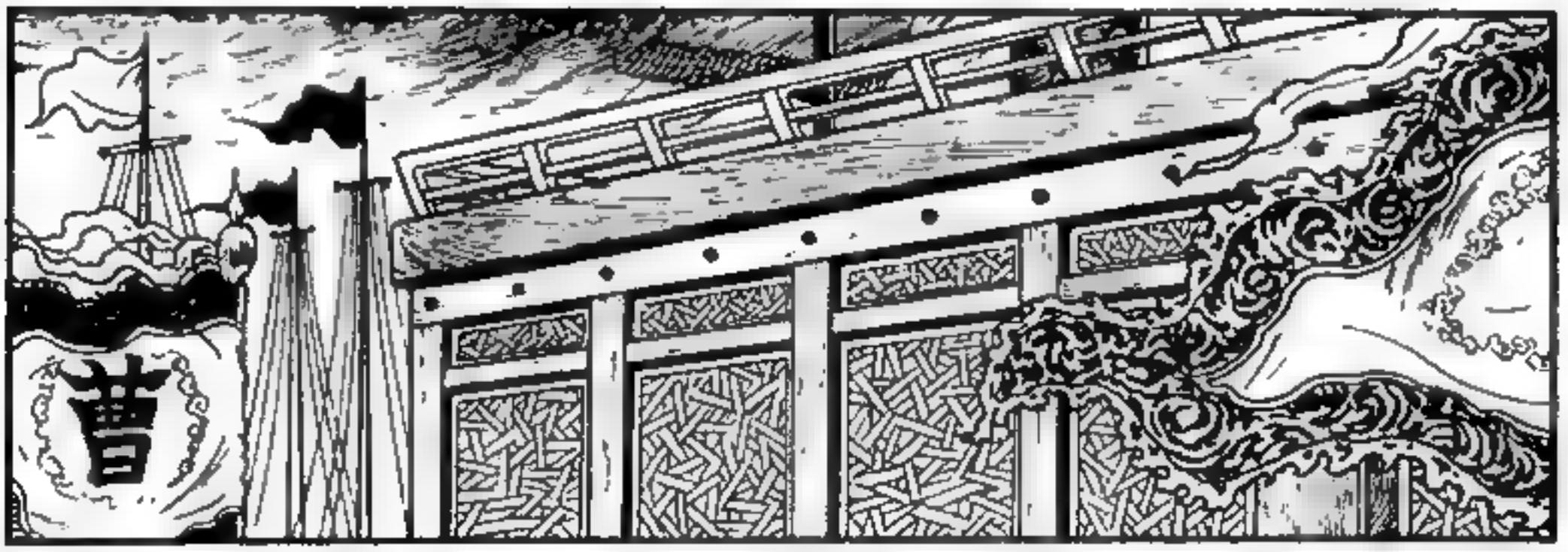
BUT AT THE SAME TIME, IT LEAVES OUR FLEET VULNERABLE TO ATTACKS BY FIRE.

IF OUR ENEMIES WERE TO USE FIRE, THE WINDS WOULD ONLY END UP SPREADING IT TO THEIR OWN SHIPS. DESPITE ALL THE NEGATIVE REMARKS I SAY ABOUT THE OFFICERS OF WU, I'M SURE THERE ARE AT LEAST A FEW WHO UNDERSTAND THE DANGER OF USING FIRE.

IT IS ALREADY THE 11TH MONTH, MEANING IT'S THE SEASON OF WESTERN WINDS. THERE IS NO CHANCE OF SOUTHEASTERN WINDS.

MY LORD'S FORESIGHT IS TRULY IMPRESSIVE.





PLEASE GRANT US 20 SHIPS SO THAT WE MAY DELIVER TO YOU THE FIRST VICTORY TO START OFF THIS WAR.

WHAT IS IT?

WE, JIAO CHU AND ZHANG NENG, HAVE A REQUEST TO ASK OF YOU, SIR.

I UNDERSTAND YOUR IMPATIENCE TO FIGHT BUT WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH ONLY 20 SHIPS?

YOU NEED NOT RUSH TO PROVE YOUR WORTH. YOUR CHANCE SHALL COME IN TIME. MOREOVER, THE SHIPS ARE ALL CHAINED TOGETHER AND IT IS NOT EASY TO REMOVE THEM AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE.

WE HAVE LIVED NEAR THE GREAT RIVER FOR ALL OUR LIVES, WHICH HAS GIVEN US MUCH EXPERIENCE IN FIGHTING ON SHIPS. PLEASE CHANCELLOR, GRANT US THIS HONOUR...

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH 20 SUCH SMALL SHIPS?

WE ARE NOT ASKING TO BORROW THE LARGER WARSHIPS. ALL WE REQUIRE ARE SMALL SHIPS THAT CAN FIT ABOUT 20 OR 30 MEN.

I ADMIRE YOUR CONFIDENCE BUT...

WE WILL ATTEMPT A SMALL RAID ON THE SHORES TO BREAK THE ENEMY MORALE.

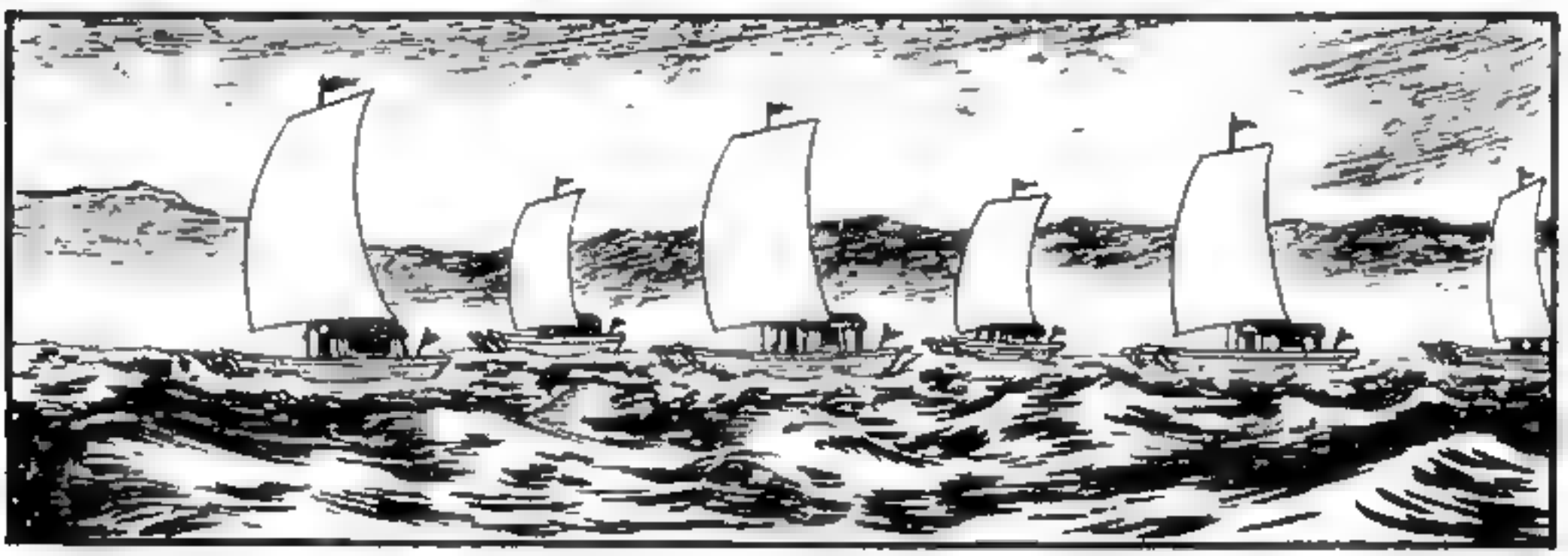
HMM...

PLEASE, CHANCELLOR. WE BEG OF YOU...

THANK YOU, SIR.

FINE, DO AS YOU WISH.

AH!



ON IT!
HURRY UP AND START THE SMOKE SIGNAL!

ENEMY SHIPS!

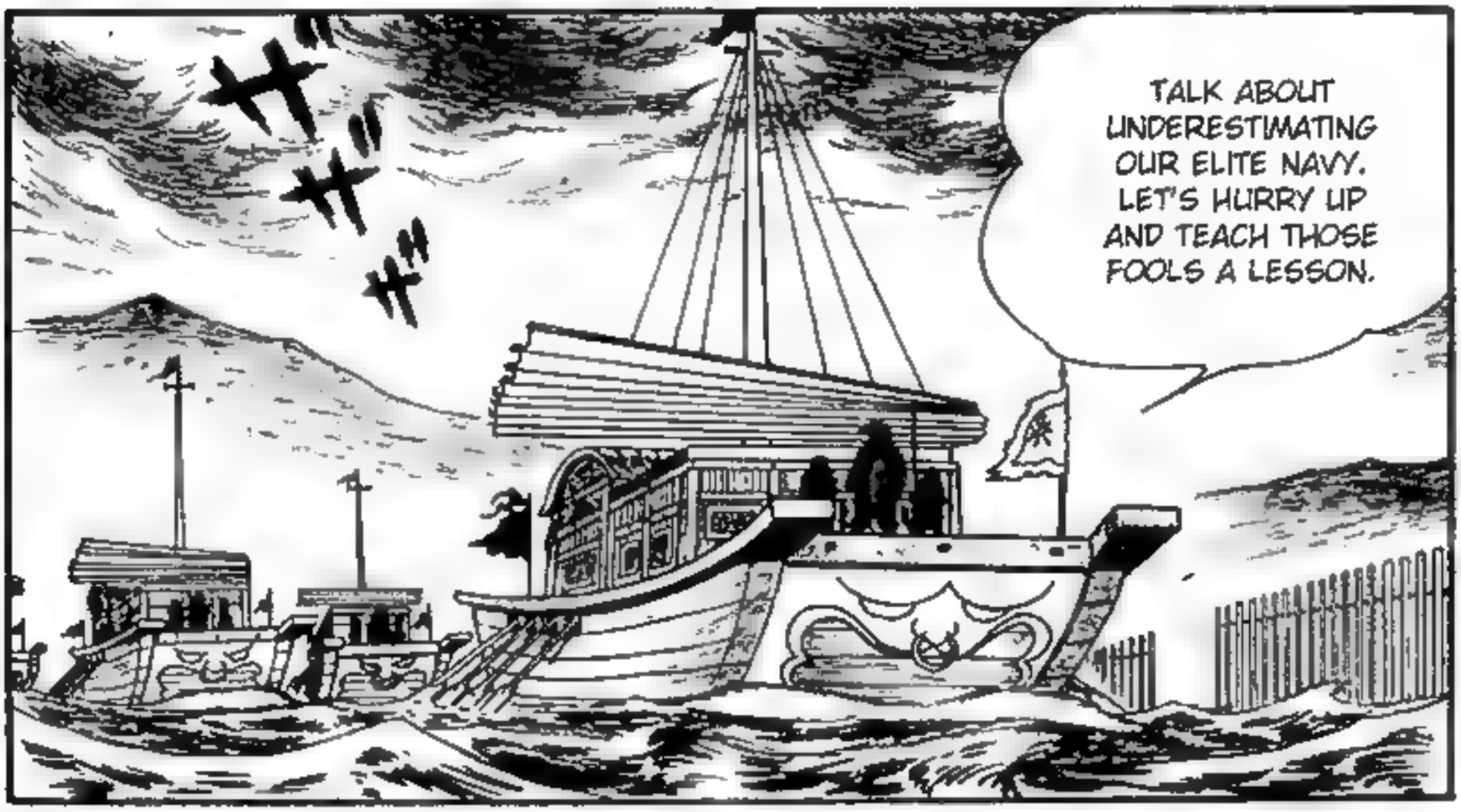
AH!

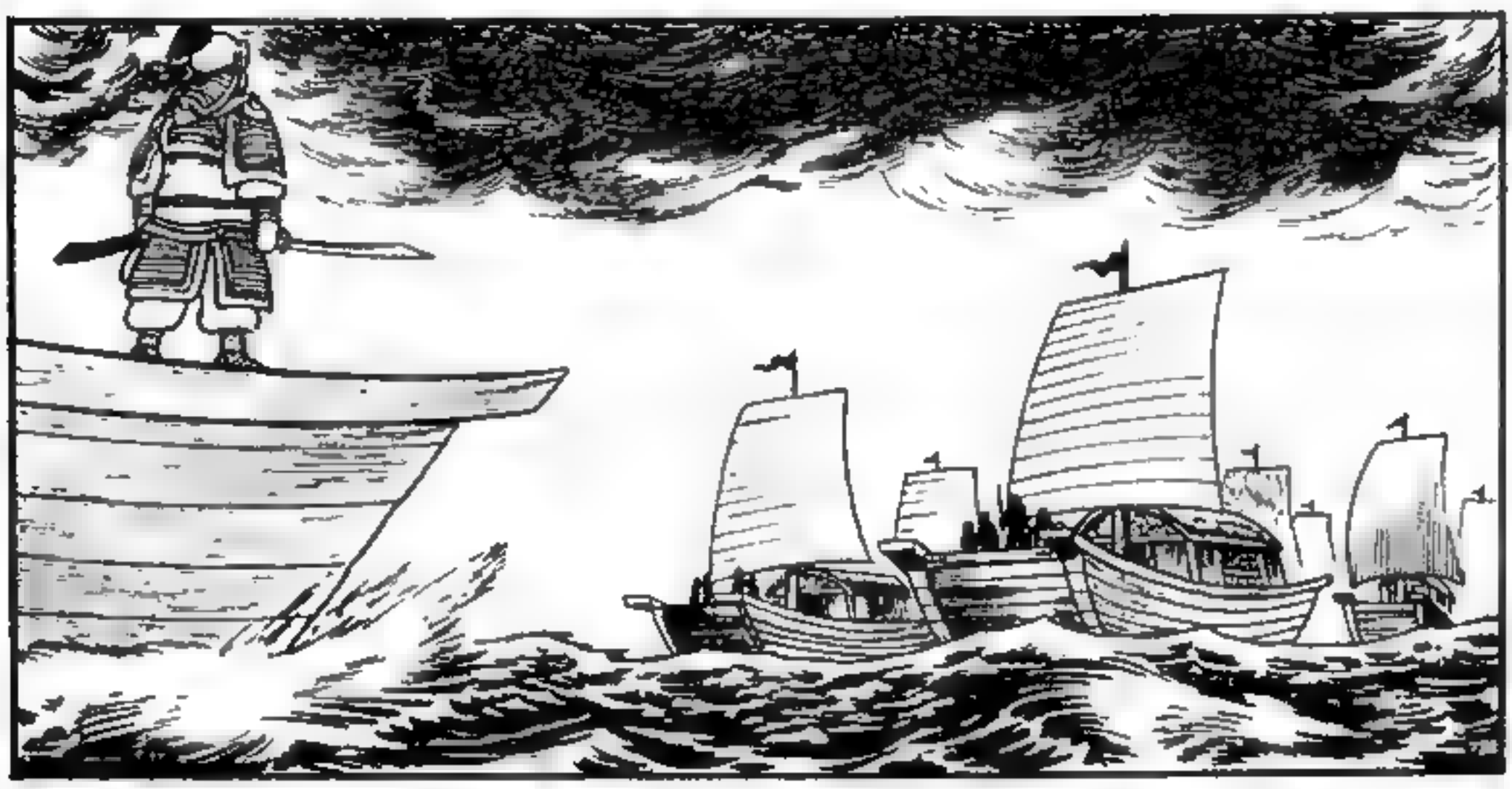
WHAT!?

ADMIRAL! THE WATCHTOWER ON THE MOUNTAINS HAS LIT ITS SMOKE SIGNAL!

周
周
YES, SIR!
SOMEBODY GO AND DEAL WITH THEM!
OH, IT'S JUST A FEW SMALL BOATS.

QUICKLY!

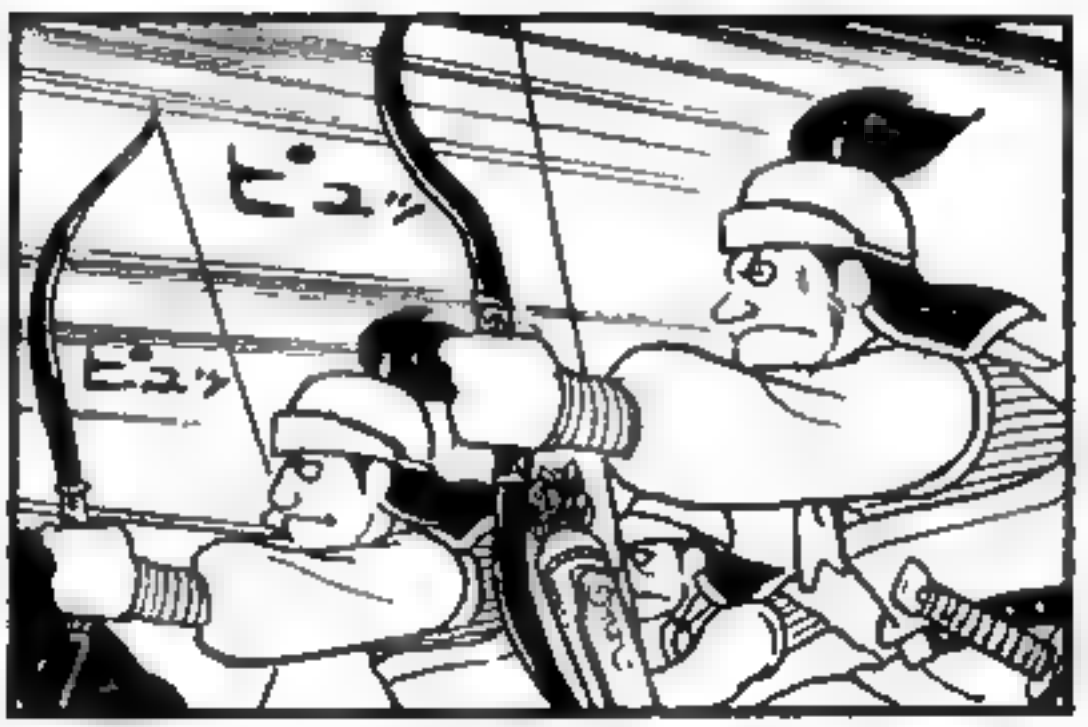

TALK ABOUT UNDERESTIMATING OUR ELITE NAVY. LET'S HURRY UP AND TEACH THOSE FOOLS A LESSON.



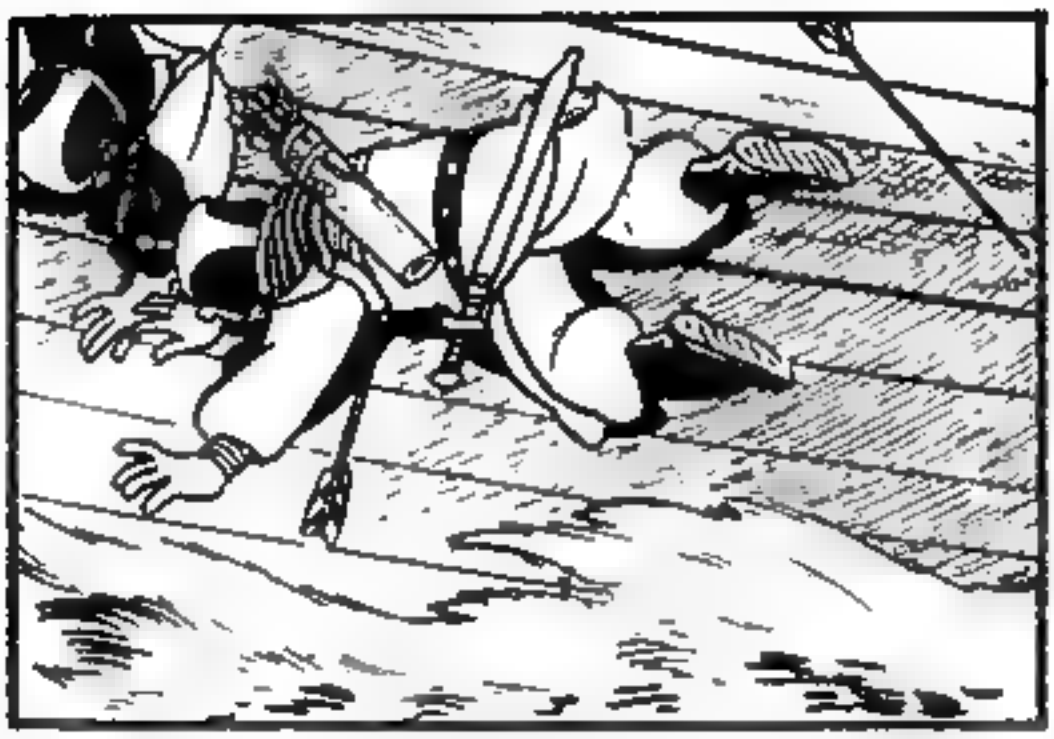
ATTACK!

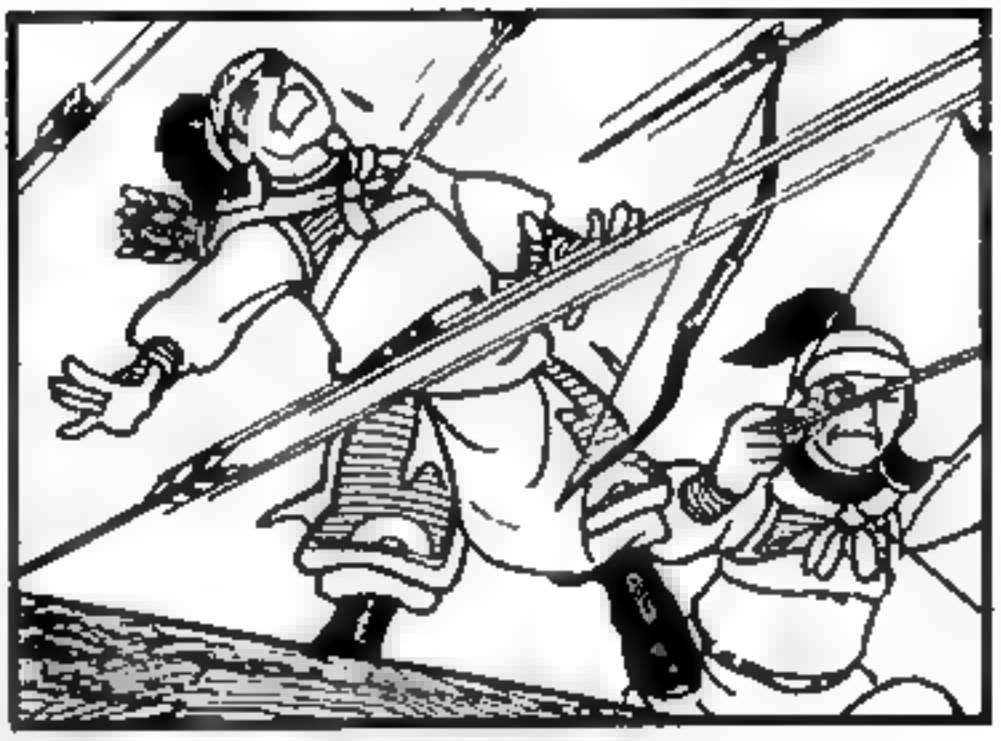
THE FIRST ONE TO STEP FOOT ASHORE SHALL BE GREATLY REWARDED!

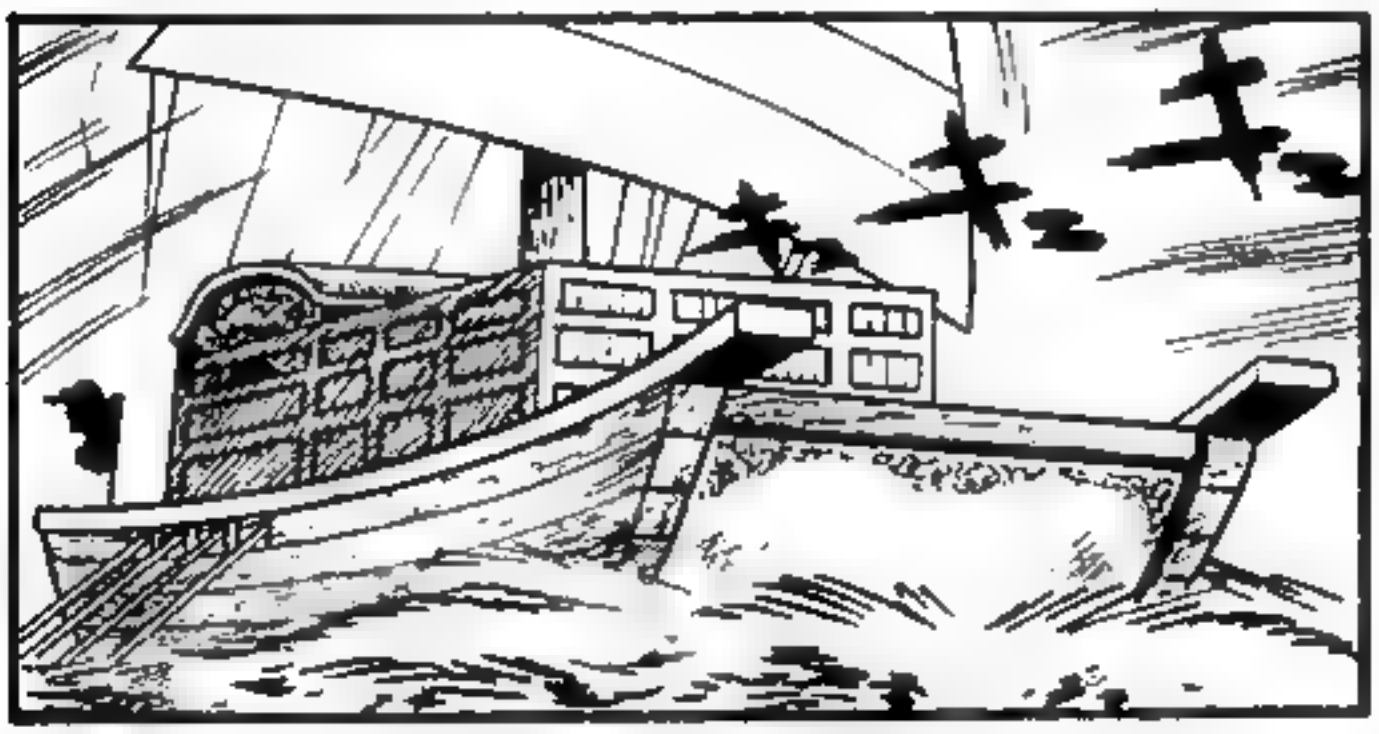
나무


피유

나무

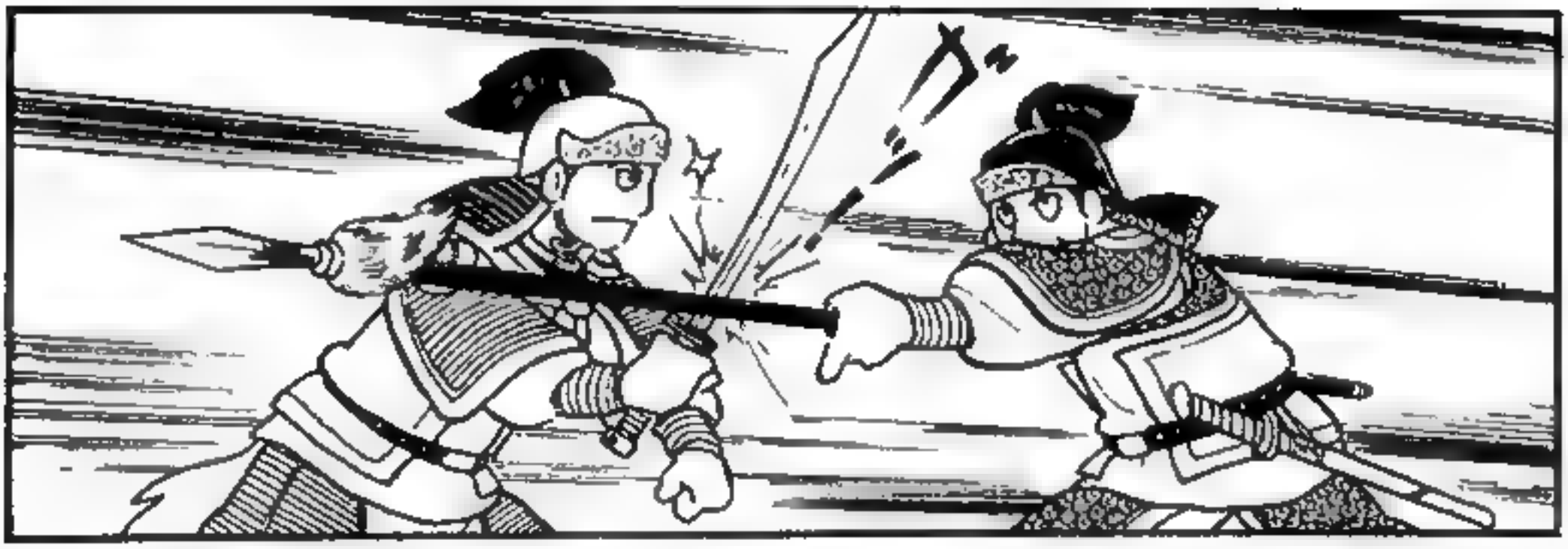






RAM
THEIR
SHIPS!

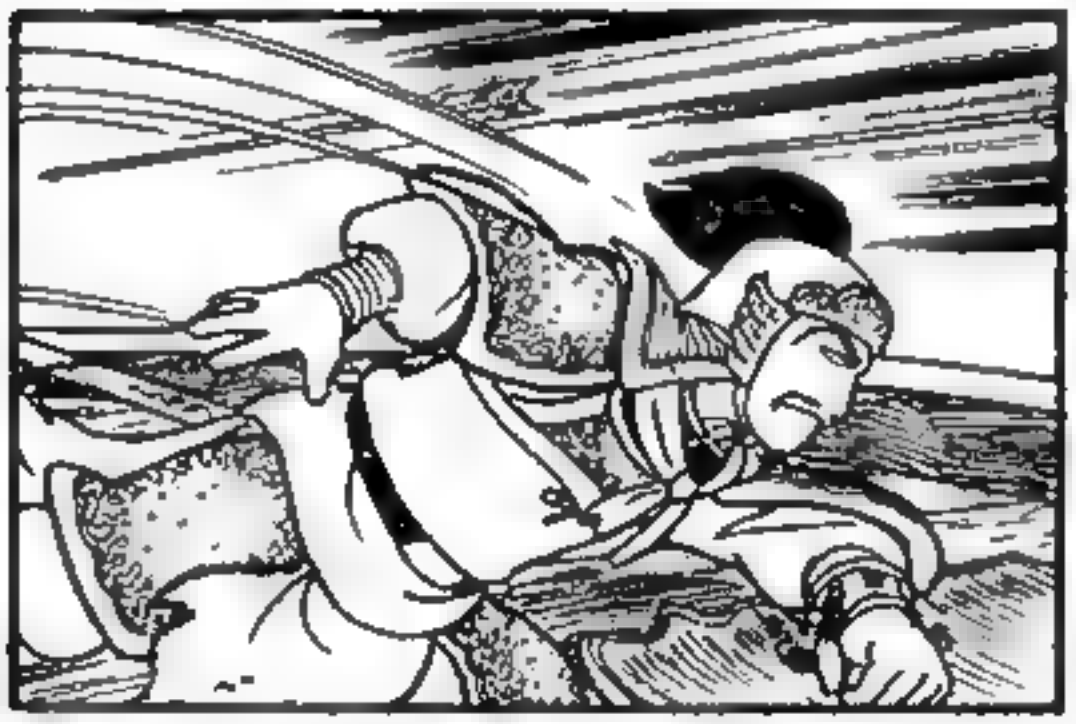
WHY
YOU!



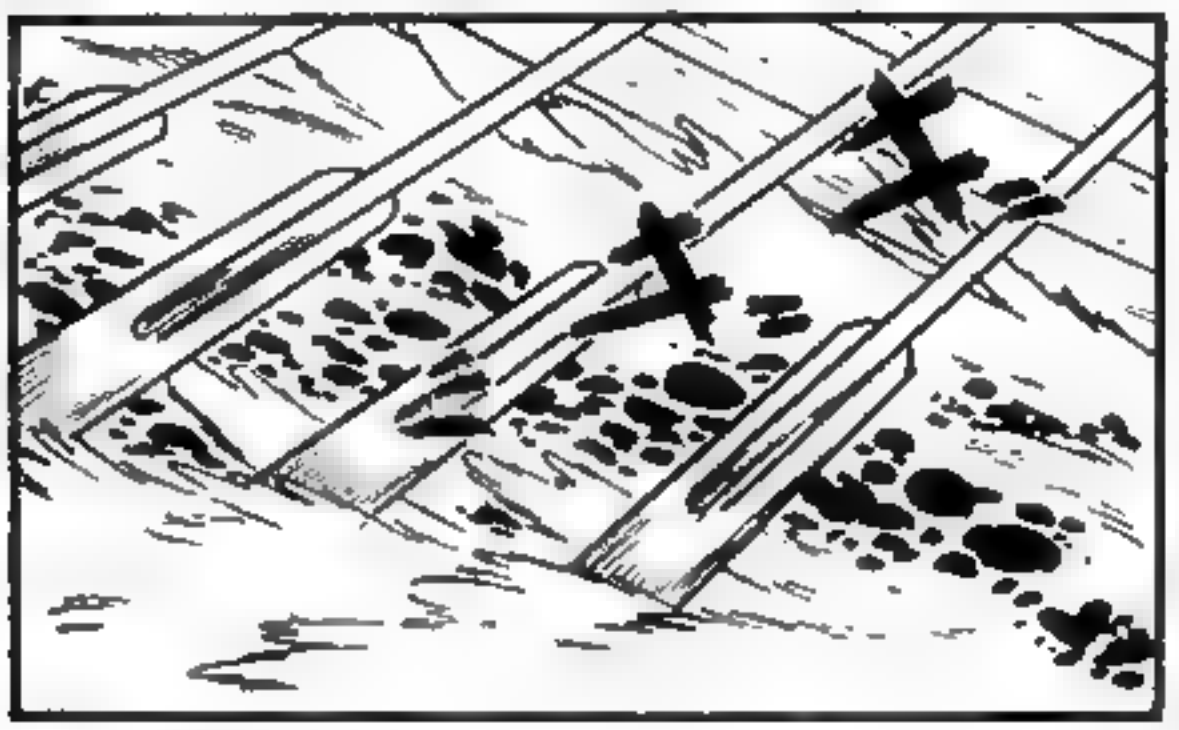
HAN DANG! HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE YOU TO KILL THAT SMALL FRY!?

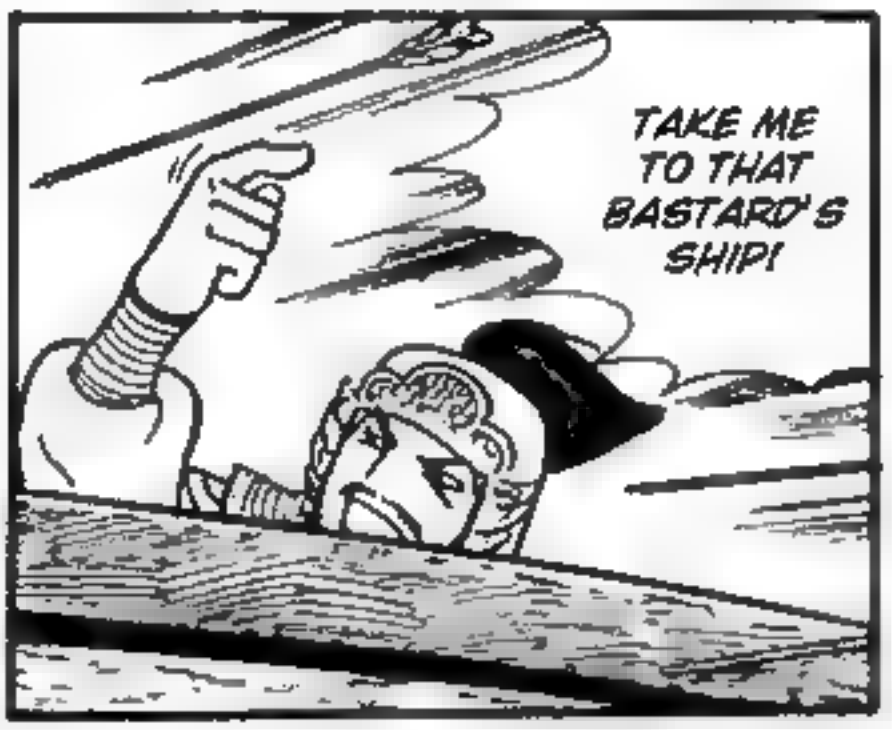
LET ME SHOW YOU HOW IT'S DONE!

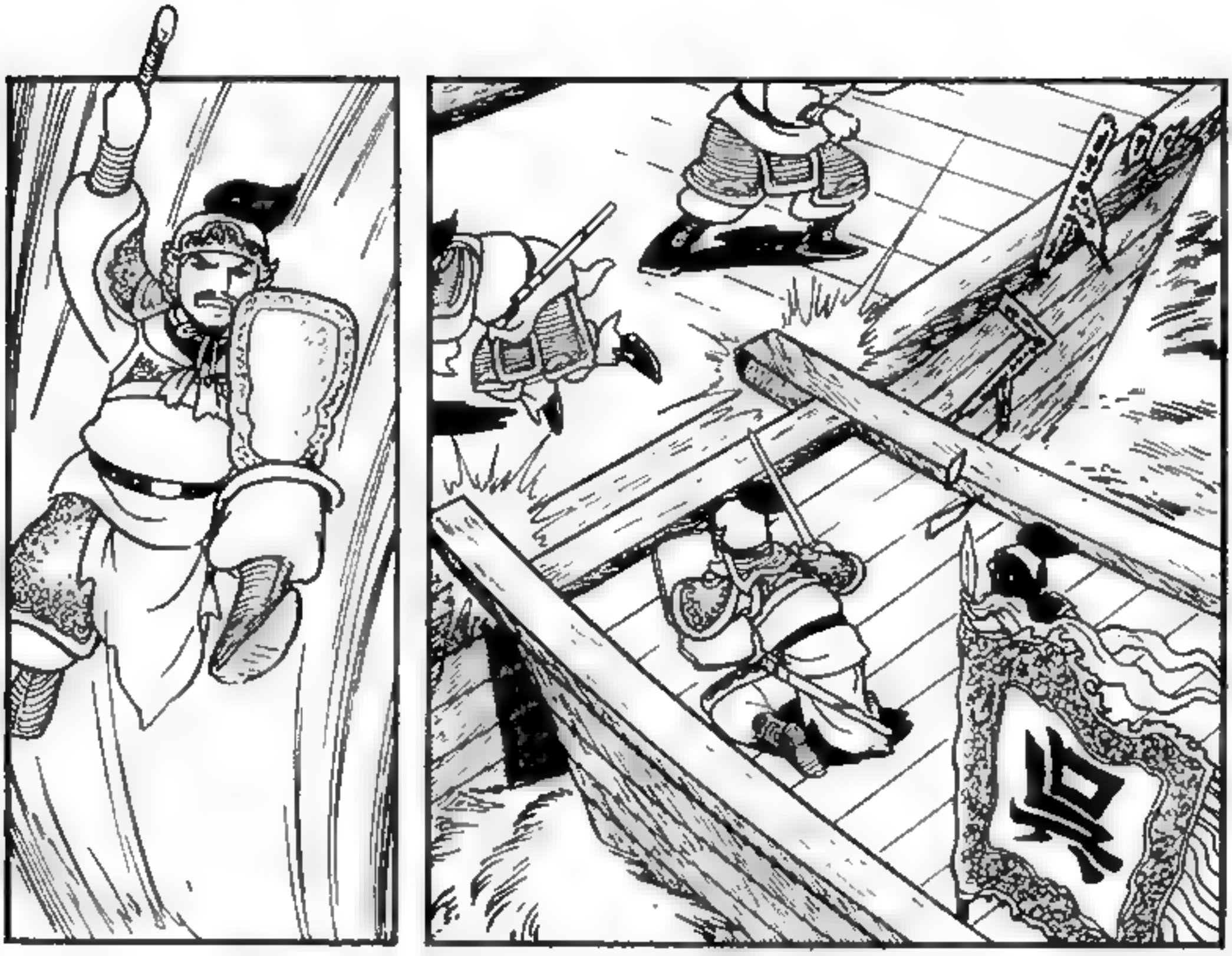
JIAO CHU!

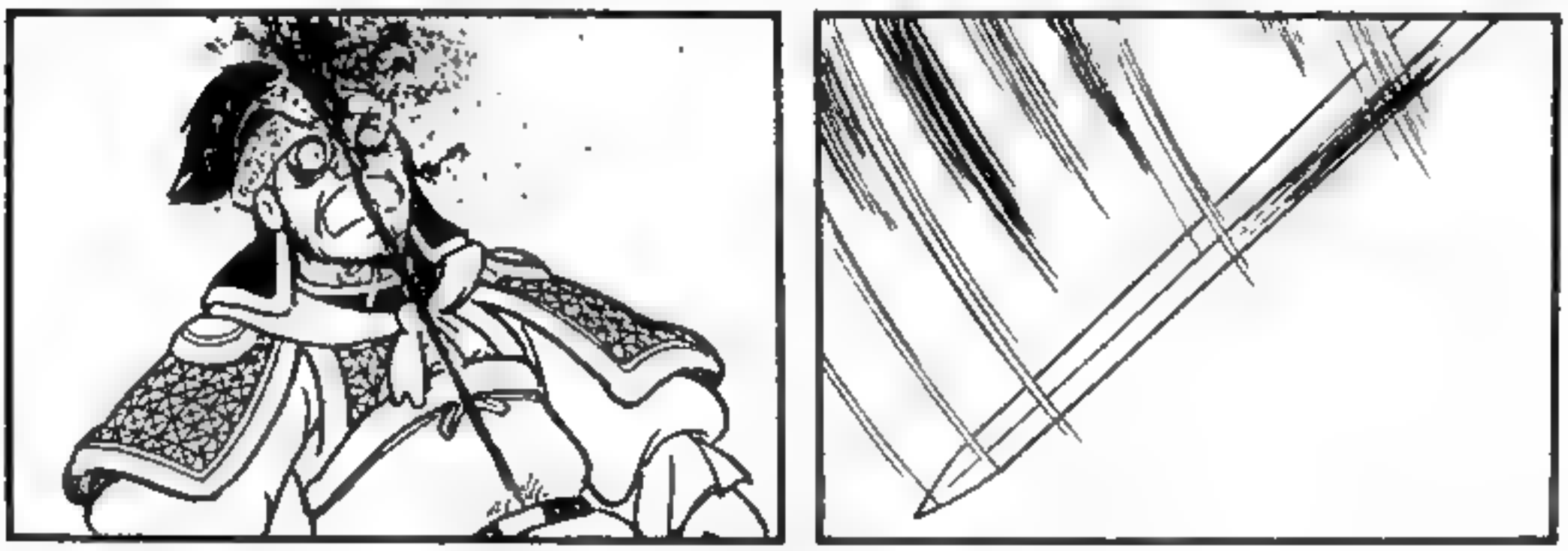


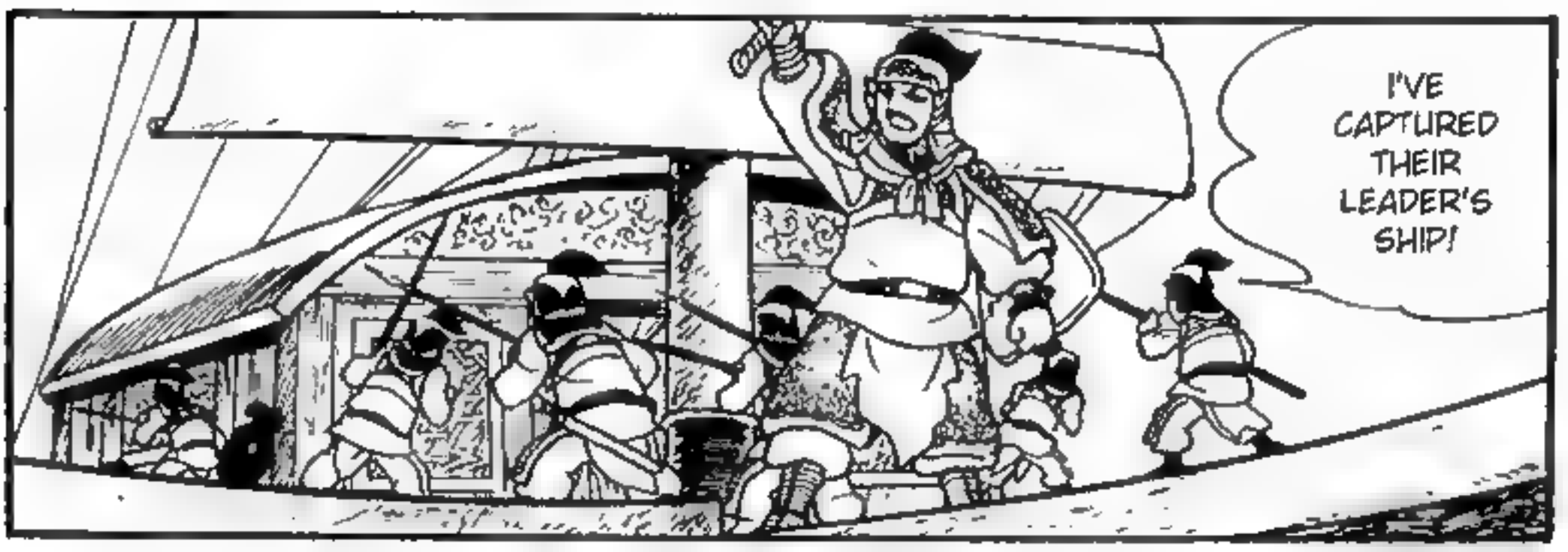
TAKE THIS!




TAKE ME TO THAT BASTARD'S SHIP!



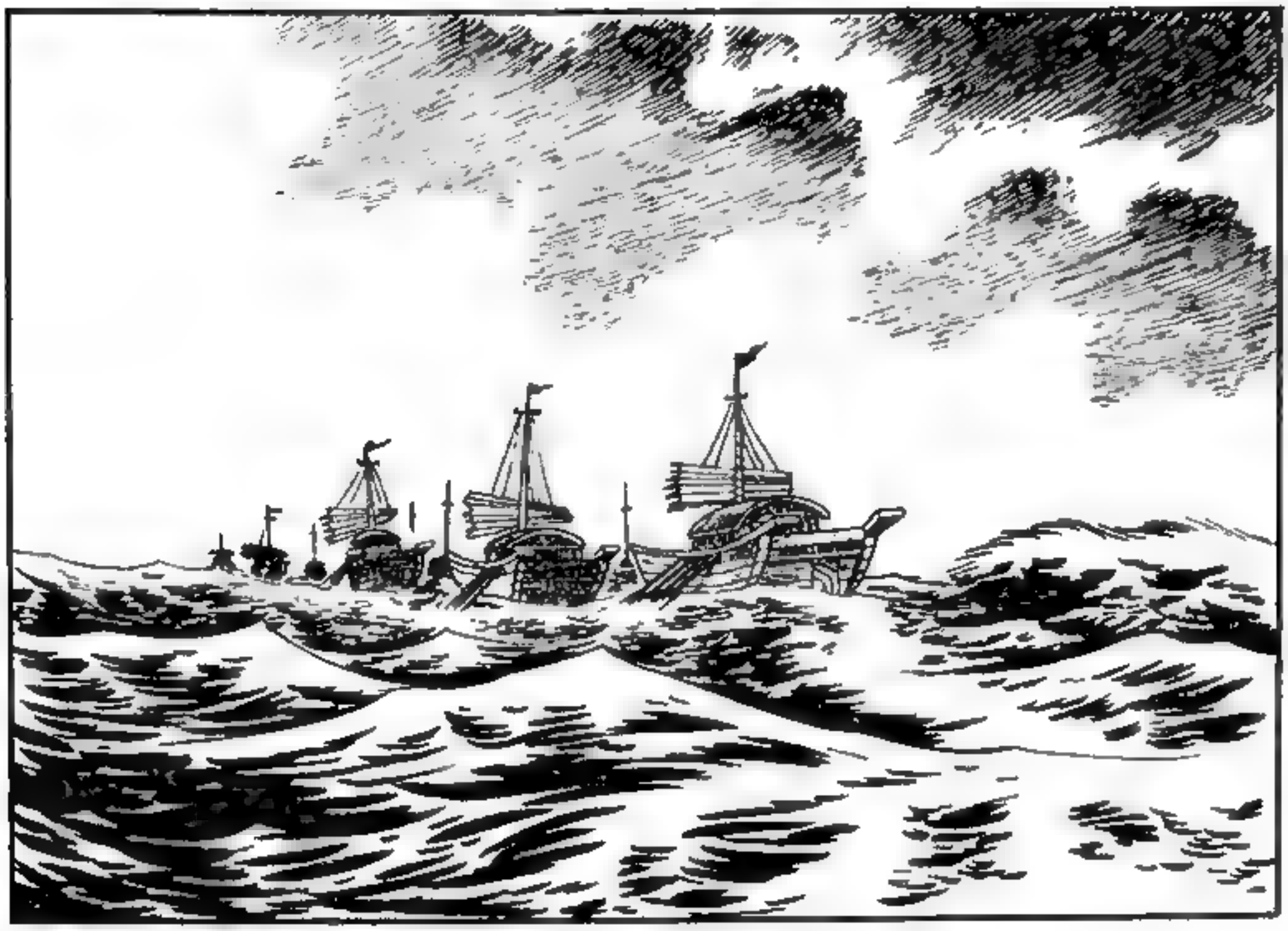


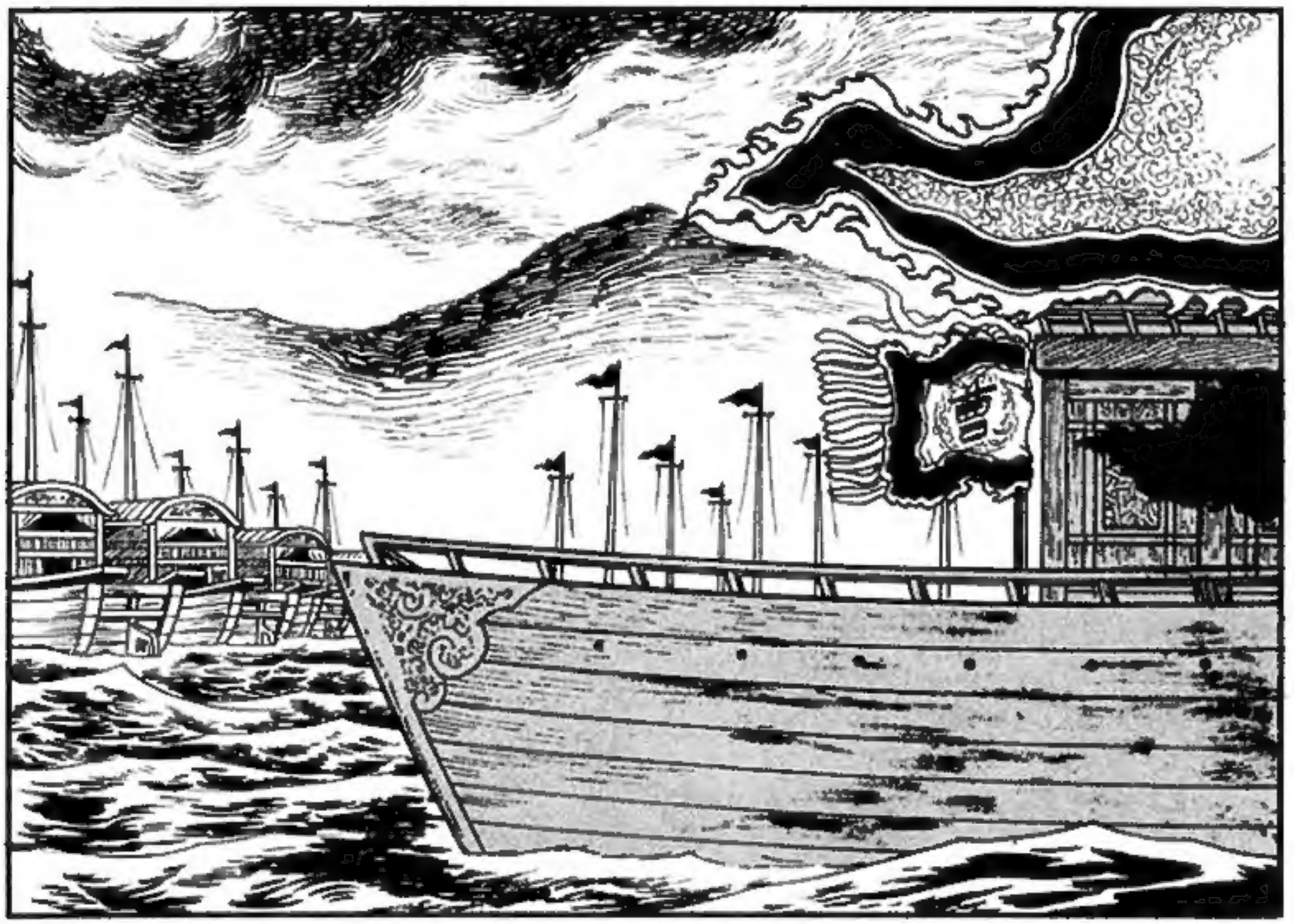

I'VE CAPTURED THEIR LEADER'S SHIP!

BOTH OUR LEADERS HAVE BEEN KILLED!

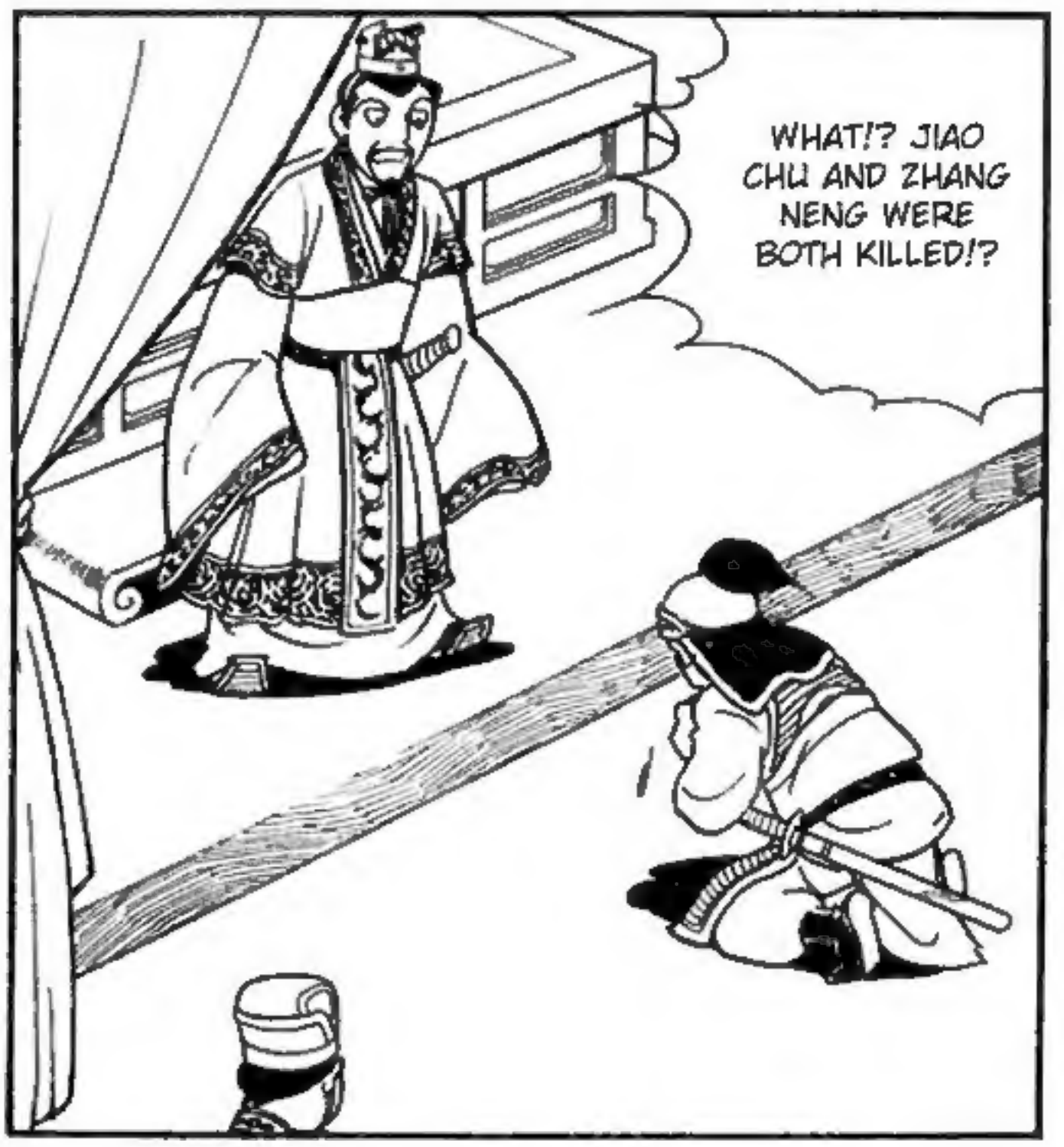
ACK!

RETREAT!
RETREAT!



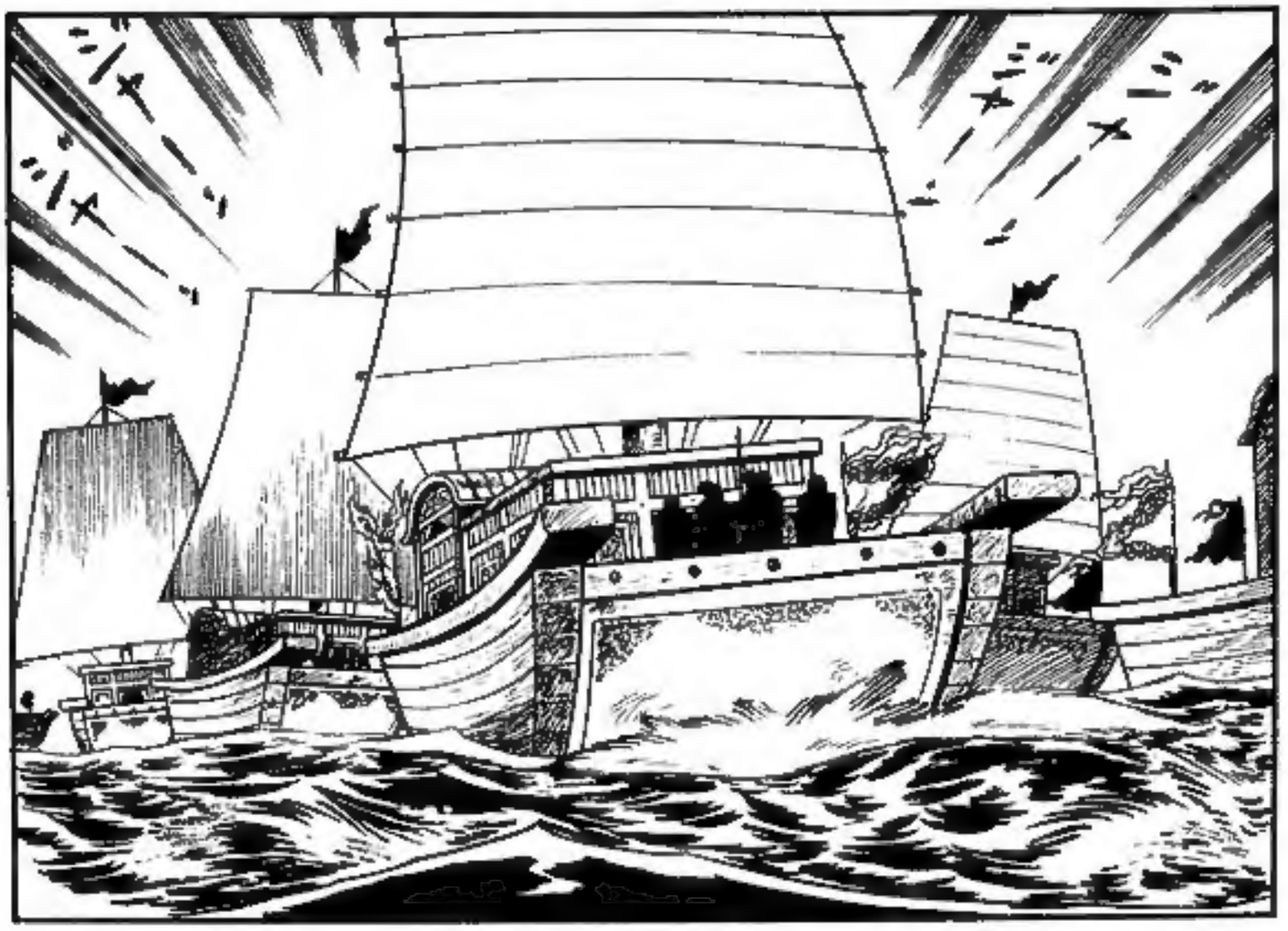


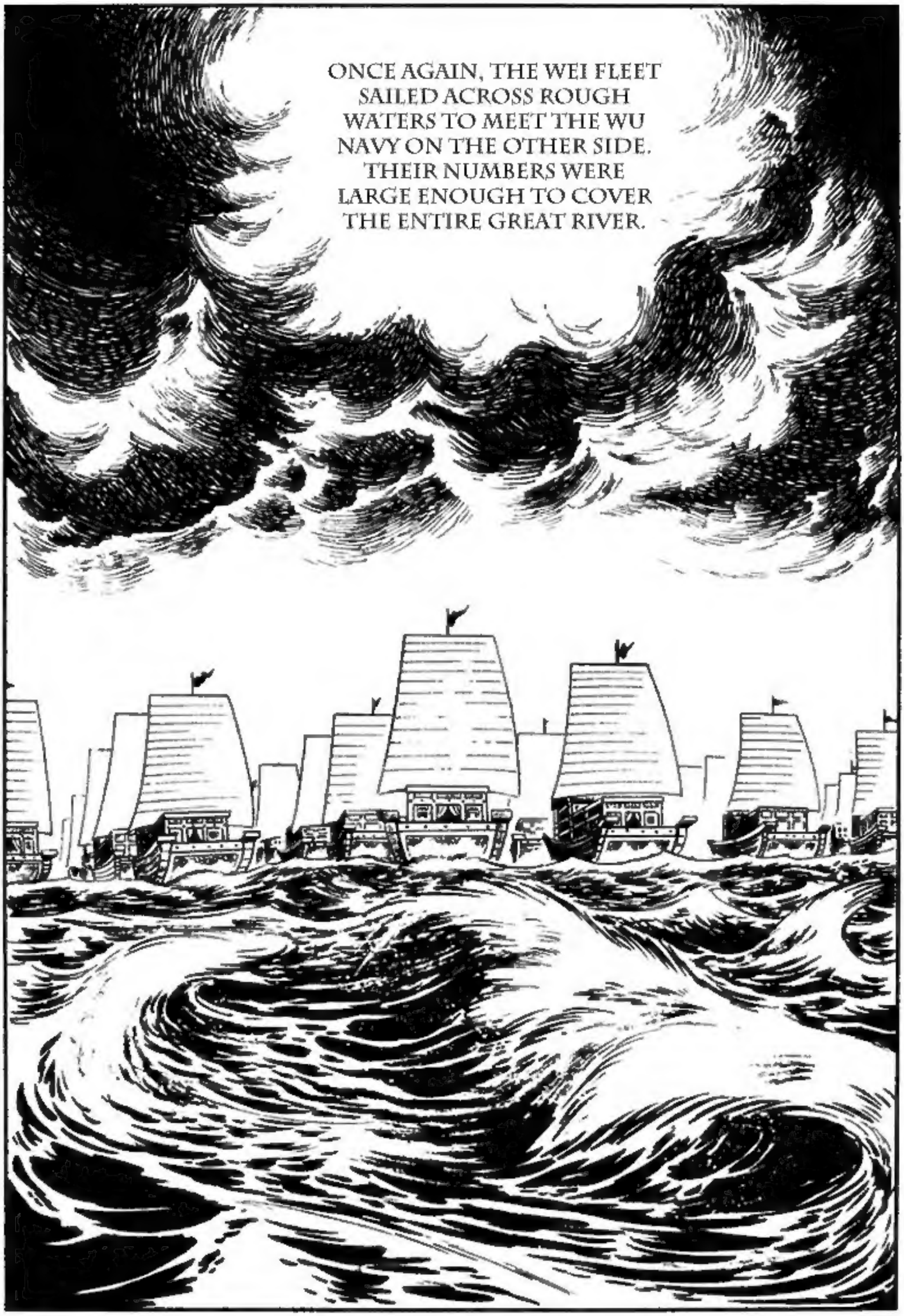
THIS IS WHY I DIDN'T WANT THEM TO ATTACK...


WHAT!? JIAO CHU AND ZHANG NENG WERE BOTH KILLED!?

BUT EVEN SO, THOSE WU SOLDIERS THINK THEY CAN GET THE BETTER OF ME?

ALL SHIPS MOVE OUT!




ONCE AGAIN, THE WEI FLEET SAILED ACROSS ROUGH WATERS TO MEET THE WU NAVY ON THE OTHER SIDE. THEIR NUMBERS WERE LARGE ENOUGH TO COVER THE ENTIRE GREAT RIVER.

TRANSLATED BY HOX

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